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— p. 47

Memo to Reich: Why Not a $100 Minimum Wage?

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It's Coming: The NEW New Left

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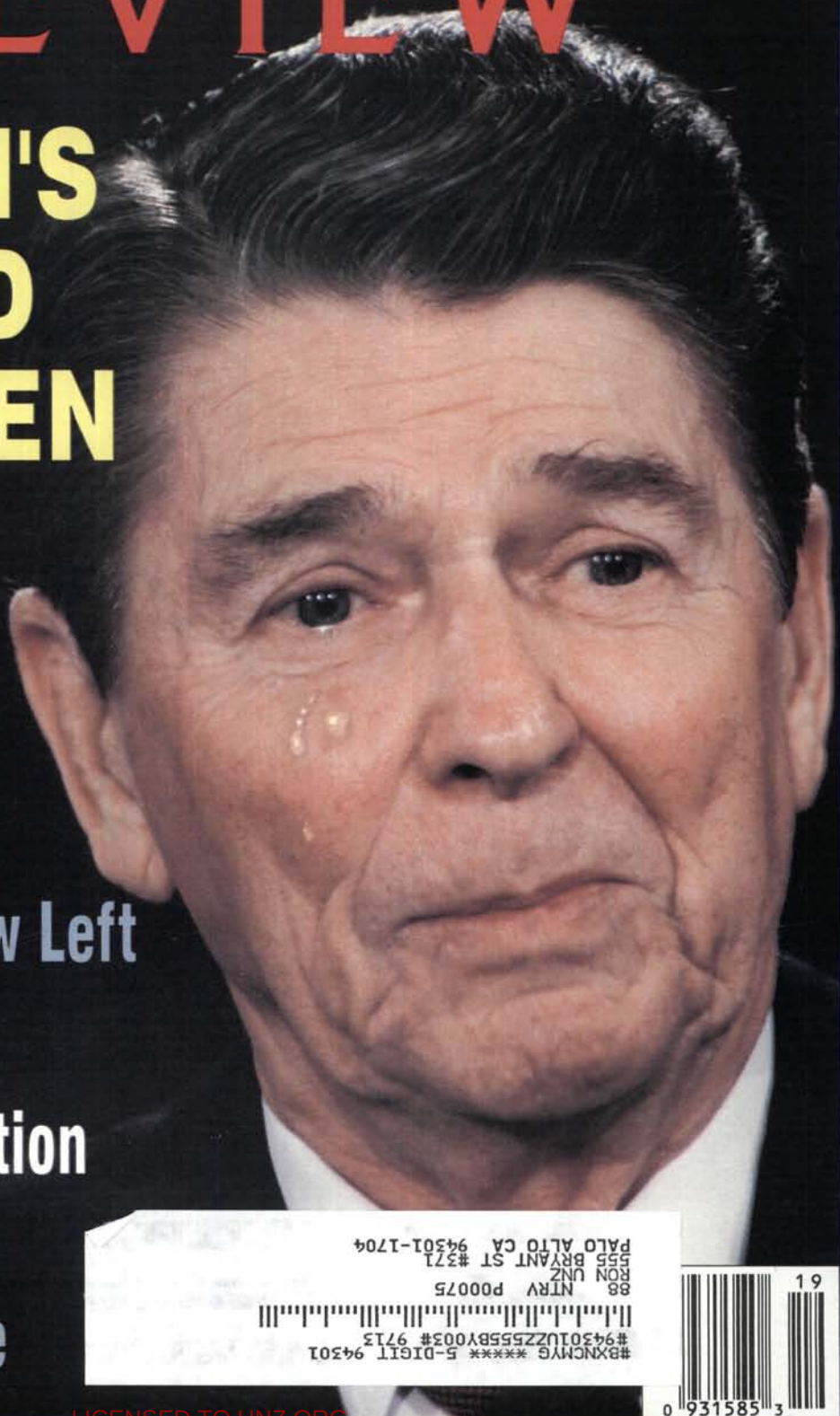
The Poor Without Welfare



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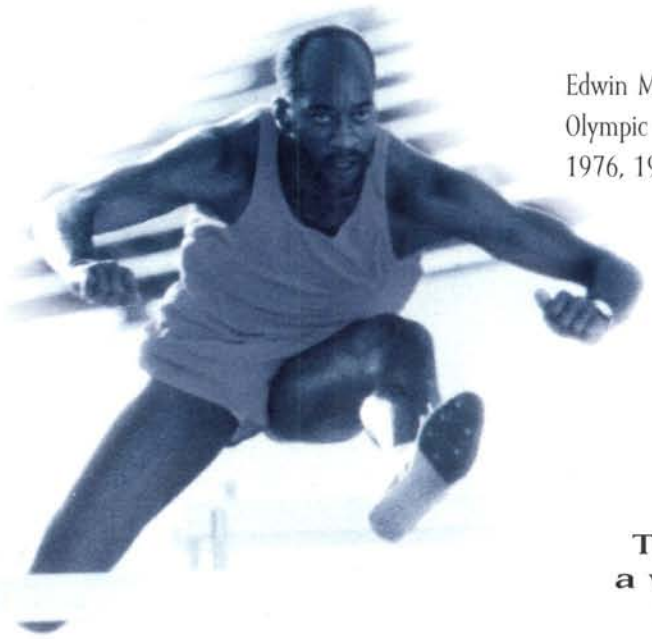

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NATIONAL REVIEW

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LETTERS

Home Run

Steve Sailer's "How Jackie Robinson Desegregated America" [April 8] was a delight. We are lucky it was fifty years ago when Jackie Robinson had to break the color barrier in baseball. Today, Jesse Jackson would demand that Robinson get four strikes; Al Sharpton would want the bases moved from 90 feet to 70 when he was at bat; if he had started off hitting poorly, the NAACP would have cried for a separate league for blacks.

Had Robinson had such a "support system" fifty years ago, he surely would not have become one of the greatest men in baseball history.

Tom Tangen
Shoreline, Wash.

Finding America at NR

Words cannot express how heartened I was to read "The America We Seek" [March 25]. As a volunteer in one of the many hundreds of Crisis Pregnancy Centers, I see pregnant girls and women week in and week out, sitting with them as they cry, helping them put their own lives together and take responsibility for the new ones within them.

It can be discouraging. One often feels so alone. So many ministers and school counselors, husbands and boyfriends, parents and girlfriends push abortion as the way to deal with any difficult pregnancy. Then there are the virtue hucksters who try to buy us off, and the Noemie Emeries who patronizingly advise us to begin looking after these women, as if we tens of thousands of volunteers had been doing something else for all these years.

Thank you, authors, for your statement. Thank you for signing your names. Perhaps some day the nation will take time to grieve for all our lost children.

Sandra Budziszewski
Austin, Tex.

Thank you for your moral manifesto on abortion. Beautiful! Worth the price of a subscription! And it atones for the silly pieces about legalizing drugs. (No one is perfect.)

Brian W. Donnelly
Pittsburgh, Pa.

A Bunch of Baloney

Phillip E. Johnson's review of Carl Sagan's *The Demon-Haunted World* [April 22] reminded me of one of the best baloney detectors I've ever come across. It's a quotation from G. K. Chesterton that appeared in *NR* June 5, 1987: "It is absurd for the evolutionist to complain that it is unthinkable for an admittedly unthinkable God to make everything out of nothing, and then pretend that it is *more* thinkable that nothing should turn itself into everything."

John R. Cassidy
Fairfax, Va.

Of Vice and Men

John Simon abandons a crucial theme in the movie *Dead Man Walking* ["Legal or Lethal," Feb. 26]. Does anyone, regardless of how vile his crimes, have the chance for eternal salvation? *Dead Man* makes it very clear that the answer is yes. Had rapist and murderer Matthew Poncelet not been on death row, he would not have met Sister Prejean, not received spiritual instruction, and not reconciled with God. Not surprisingly, it was just prior to Poncelet's execution that all the necessary spiritual elements were present.

Thomas Aquinas drew the same conclusion: "The fact that the evil, as long as they live, can be corrected from their errors does not prohibit the fact that they may be justly executed, for the danger which threatens from their way of life is greater and more certain than the good which may be expected from their improvement. They also have at that critical point of death the opportunity to be converted to God through repentance . . ." (*Summa Contra Gentiles*, Book III, 146).

Truly, it was Poncelet's facing execution that led to his salvation.

Dianne Clements
Justice For All
Houston, Tex.

Common Core of Ignorance

I beg to take issue with the phrase "loss of a common core of knowledge" in "The Week" [April 22] regarding the National Association of Scholars' report on education in America.

There *is* a common core among today's young people. Unfortunately, it's based on Sixties radicalism, and on the most recent pop music, movies, and television.

I recently went to see the comedy *Flirting with Disaster*, and the audience—upscale, mind you—was convulsed by a sarcastic allusion to Reagan, references to acid trips and the Grateful Dead, and a crack about the Cleaver family. Humorous references to Henry VIII, Homer, or the French Revolution would no doubt have created bewilderment.

In a frighteningly short time, our so-called educated young people have lost centuries of wisdom and learning, and now settle for shallow sound-bites of knowledge. Shades of Shakespeare's "Triton of the minnows"—if anyone still knows what a triton is, or can anyone identify poor Willie any more.

Sylvia Baumgarten
New York, N.Y.

You Taught Us!

You wondered ["The Week," April 8] why the American Conservative Union had suddenly, after all these years, become liberal on welfare reform. In the same issue, you criticized Rep. Bob Barr for deserting conservatism on the crime bill. You could have faulted us for that also, since we were actively supporting his amendments to President Clinton's terrorist legislation.

But it is not the ACU that has deserted the conservative standard. For thirty years, we have supported welfare reform that would end its entitlement status and result in the minimum of federal strings—with the ultimate goal of transferring the whole program to the states, according to the Constitution. We have opposed the expansion of federal power to encroach upon state criminal law, even if it is justified as "related to" terrorism. The strange thing is that our officers were all taught by NATIONAL REVIEW to take these positions and have been supported by *NR* over the years for doing so.

Donald Devine
The American Conservative Union
Alexandria, Va.

Pass the Gravel

Richard M. Langworth ["Letters," April 22] wrote that many "conservatives, like me, will [not vote] or vote for the Libertarian—or even Clinton [in the November election]." This is redundant: not voting *is* voting for Clinton. Voting for the Libertarian *is* voting for Clinton. As for a conservative casting his vote for Clinton—that is too silly for comment.

There have always been Republicans who think a stinging loss is better than a less than complete victory. (Most recently in 1992, when a bunch of them voted for Perot to avoid voting for Bush.) This is like saying, "Bush isn't conservative enough, so I'll go with Clinton." If that makes sense, I'll eat a large bucket of gravel.

Warren P. Snyder
Evanston, Ill.

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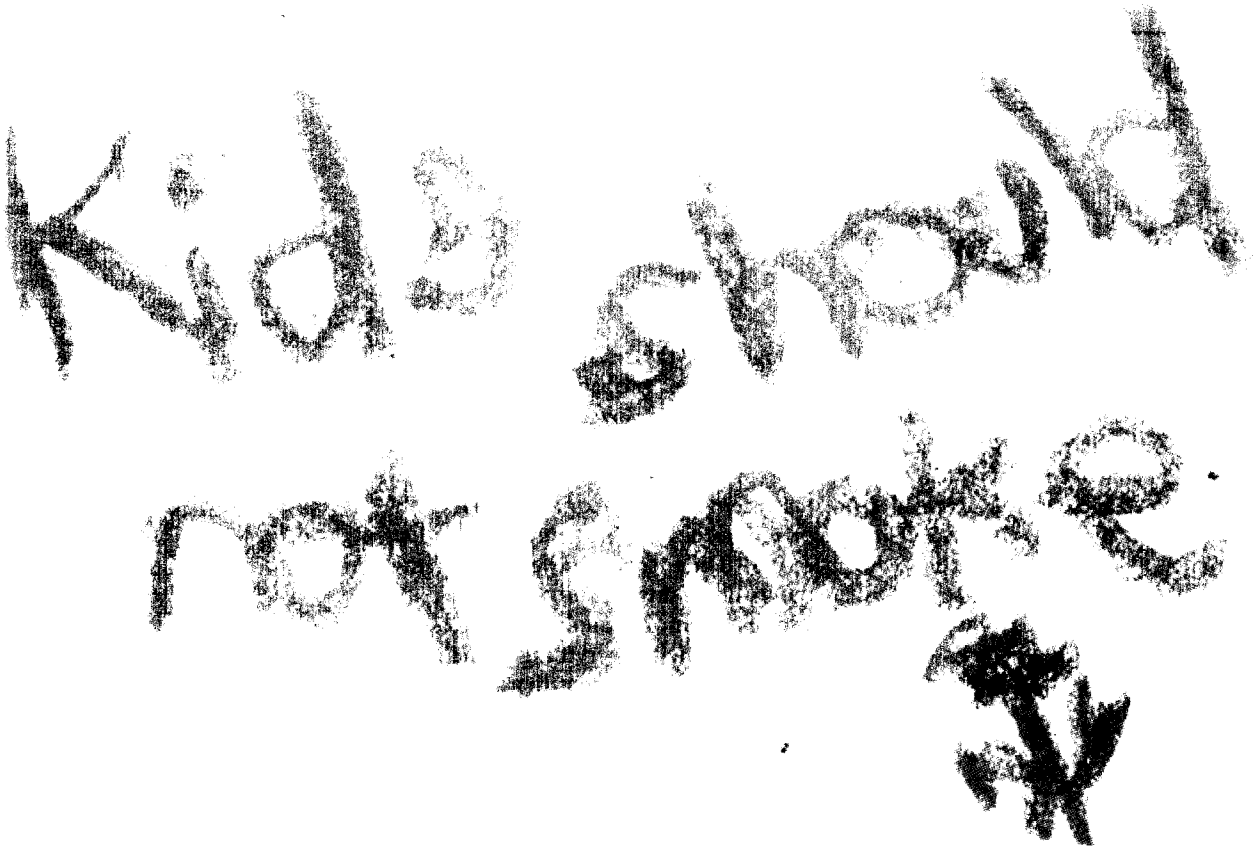

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FROM THE EDITOR

Editorial Judgments

■ "A lie is halfway round the world before the truth has got its boots on." But, eventually, truth gets booted and spurred, and the lie gets a good kicking.

I recently came across an article titled "The Return of Respectable Racism" in a Canadian quarterly, *The Queen's Quarterly*, by W. Fitzhugh Brundage, who teaches history at Queens College, Ontario, and is currently a research fellow at the U.S. National Humanities Center.

Mr. Brundage indicted NATIONAL REVIEW as a practitioner of respectable racism because of its approval of *The Bell Curve*: "*The National Review* crowed that it 'confirms ordinary citizens' reasonable intuition that trying to engineer racial equality in the distribution of occupations and social positions runs against not racial prejudice but nature, which shows no such egalitarian distribution of talents.' "

But *NR* never expressed an editorial judgment on *The Bell Curve*. We ran a symposium of 14 distinguished social scientists on the book, and left it at that. Still, the quote rang a bell.

Sure enough, Mr. Brundage's research had consisted of reading as far as the *second* sentence of Steven Fraser's introduction to the paperback *The Bell Curve Wars* (Basic Books), which reads: "However, contributors to a symposium in *The National Review* described it as 'magisterial' and noted that it 'confirms ordinary citizens' reasonable" etc., etc. . .

Symposium contributors had also described the book as "mischievous," "deeply flawed," and "a moral and political cul de sac." But one can hardly expect a sensitive liberal editor like Mr. Fraser to pass up a good stereotype.

Still, I assumed that the quote, though not representative of a divided symposium, was actually present there. But was it? A careful reading has failed to locate it. Mr. Fraser, it appears, put quotation marks around his own paraphrase of *one* contribution, and Mr. Brundage fathered the result on *NR*, citing it in the process as evidence of our "racism."

Will Messrs. Brundage and Fraser apologize for their respective crimes and misdemeanors? Probably not. Being liberal, like being in love, means never having to say you're sorry.

■ I recently had the kind of melancholy conversation one has only with other editors. Their theme never varies: my readers don't understand me.

"They seem to think," he groaned, "that I agree with everything in the magazine. They won't accept that some articles are published because they are lively or provocative. And when an article is 90 per cent praise of some conservative group, its supporters notice only the 10 per cent criticism. It's so *unfair*."

Yes, an editor's life is a lonely one. I felt a pang of compassion for him, not untinged with warm-hearted compassion for myself.

For I am expecting a torrent of letters from National Rifle Association members. Conor Cruise O'Brien's article on how liberalism imposes unilateral disarmament upon governments in the battle with terrorism ended by warning that NRA members, while repudiating terrorist acts, might join liberals in opposing a clampdown on terrorists who were "white, Christian, and conservative."

Now, I could disavow Dr. O'Brien's article as "a stimulating contribution to debate." But I agree with most of what he wrote. Or I could quibble with the specifics of his NRA warning: thus, a terrorist cannot be "conservative" almost by definition. (Right-wing, maybe.)

But that warning has to be heeded when a coalition of ACLU Democrats and NRA Republicans is opposing a post-Oklahoma anti-terrorism bill on both liberal and libertarian grounds.

Having said which, *NR* remains strongly opposed to gun control—and on grounds very similar to Dr. O'Brien's critique of liberalism. As long as millions of *illegal* guns circulate freely among criminals (and no one credibly promises to remove them), then gun control is no more than the unilateral disarmament of the law-abiding. —JOHN O'SULLIVAN

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FOR THE RECORD

■ **Bill Clinton**'s veto of partial-birth-abortion ban draws instant reaction from both sides. **Bill Bennett** says, "We now know that there is no abortion to which Bill Clinton objects. None." In scathing column, liberal **Mary McGrory** writes that Clinton "gave Catholics the back of his hand." But **Kate Michelman** applauds Prez for choosing "compassion and concern for families facing medical tragedies over the cynical, election-year ploy of the politicians advancing this legislation." . . . GrassRoots Research finds that 45 per cent of Americans support a constitutional ban on most abortions, 25 per cent oppose the ban but also believe abortion is immoral, and 25 per cent believe that abortion is morally acceptable—with almost no difference between men's and women's attitudes. . . . Meanwhile, D.C. pro-choice Republican activist **Julie Finley** writes friends on how "to bring our party back" from "extremely conservative but clearly confused constituents [who] began to organize and move to control" GOP. Noting that **Bob Dole** employs **Nelson Rockefeller Jr.**, "who inherited his father's principles of governance," she writes, "I firmly believe that Bob Dole is the 'bridge' candidate to that return. . . . We are not going to make a switch at once from right to left. . . . It takes a few years." . . . Bloody but unbowed, **Alan Keyes** forges ahead with campaign for GOP presidential nomination in Indiana, Pennsylvania, North Carolina. Campaign disorganization frustrates fund-raiser **Joyce Downey**: "To tell you the truth, I've been faxing the scheduler for the past two days with big exclamatory letters: 'I will do some physical hurt to you. I can't do my job if I don't know where the candidate is.'" . . . **Ralph Nader** promises "to make a stand on a no-money campaign," could hurt Clinton in California. . . . **Alma Powell** tells *Ladies Home Journal*, "I don't want to describe the hate mail we've gotten. You think everybody loves **Colin Powell**. Everybody doesn't like Colin Powell."

■ Two D.C teapot-tempests erupt: **Bryant Gumbel** and **Jesse Jackson** attack Republicans for showing insufficient sorrow over **Ron Brown**'s death; **Haley Barbour** responds that he sent condolences to Brown's family, and **Gingrich** spokesman **Tony Blankley** scores Jackson for politicizing a tragedy. And **Mary Matalin**, announcing she'll work for Dole campaign, draws heat for role in '92 Bush campaign and marriage to Democratic campaign guru **James Carville**; **Andy Rooney** and *60 Minutes* producer **Don Hewitt** say keeping her radio show would be unethical. Then Matalin reverses herself, expressing concern that she would distract attention from the candidate, and adds: "And let me say to Andy Rooney and Don Hewitt, there is no less objective show than *60 Minutes*. . . . There is always a plan to whatever piece they're doing and the facts are edited to fit that plan." . . . **Molly Ivins** on Texas Democrats' improbable Senate nominee, high-school teacher **Victor Morales**: "He's just a sweetie pie. My concern is if they put him up against **Phil Gramm**, he's going to come out minced sweetie pie." . . . Rep. **Richard "Doc" Hastings** (R., Wash.), the freshman who most often supported Newt Gingrich in 1995, on being called a "Newtoid": "I'm guilty of doing what I said I was going to do." . . . Your tax dollars at work: Capital Research Center discovers that the Sentencing Project—a D.C. think tank advocating fewer prisons and more social programs to combat crime and attacking criminal-justice system as discriminatory—is funded through a "major grant" from the Department of Justice. . . . Rep. **Charles Rangel** (D., N.Y.) worries that anti-drug message hasn't been sent since 1980s: "I really never thought I'd miss **Nancy Reagan**, but I do."

Matt—Rothco

"How nutty is the cutlet?"

■ South Korean Pres. **Kim Young-sam**'s New Korea Party did better than expected in off-year parliamentary elections, thanks to North Korea's forays into DMZ. **Kim Dae-jung**, president's leftist archrival, failed to win seat, along with three other potential candidates for next year's presidential elections. **Yang Hwee-boo**, executive director of state-run Korean Broadcasting, whose $2-million poll predicted landslide against the president, in "confusion and shock." . . . Mexico's semi-official Labor Congress threatened with split after leader **Rafael Rivapalacio** cancels traditional May First parade fearing unrest over growing unemployment. Telephone workers of Trotskyist tendency under **Francisco Hernandez** plan "unauthorized" march. Split could embarrass AFL-CIO, which has long maintained close ties to Labor Congress even though it is practically a wing of Mexico's ruling party, in power for 67 years and now under fire for corruption and the wobbling economy. . . . **Tom Bell**, **Margaret Thatcher**'s favorite PR man, goes to work for Russian Pres. **Boris Yeltsin**'s re-election campaign. But Poland's ex-Pres. **Lech Walesa**, having himself lost big for re-election, tells Northwestern University students Yeltsin won't make it in June 16 elections. . . . Czech Pres. **Vaclav Havel** says West has encouraged Russian opposition to NATO expansion by hesitating. . . . Embattled British PM **John Major**, attacking Opposition Leader **Tony Blair**, says, "Labour and high taxes go together like strawberries and cream." Major also pledges referendum on joining common European currency.

■ Campaign kick-off for Sen. **John Kerry** (D., Mass.) featured Rep. **Joe Kennedy** getting the national anthem wrong ("Oh say can you see. By the Star-Spangled Banner"), Sen. Kerry referring to "the University of Lowell at Dartmouth," and this from Sen. Kerry's wife, **Teresa Heinz**: "If there is anything I can do as a woman and as his wife to make his life richer, after 12 years of celibacy, I promise you I will." Quoth Sen. Kerry: "I'm not touching that with a ten-foot pole." Neither are we.

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THE WEEK

■ "Having pled guilty, I do not believe that I am any different than the vast majority of the members of Congress," said former Rep. Dan Rostenkowski on his way to prison. Neither do we.

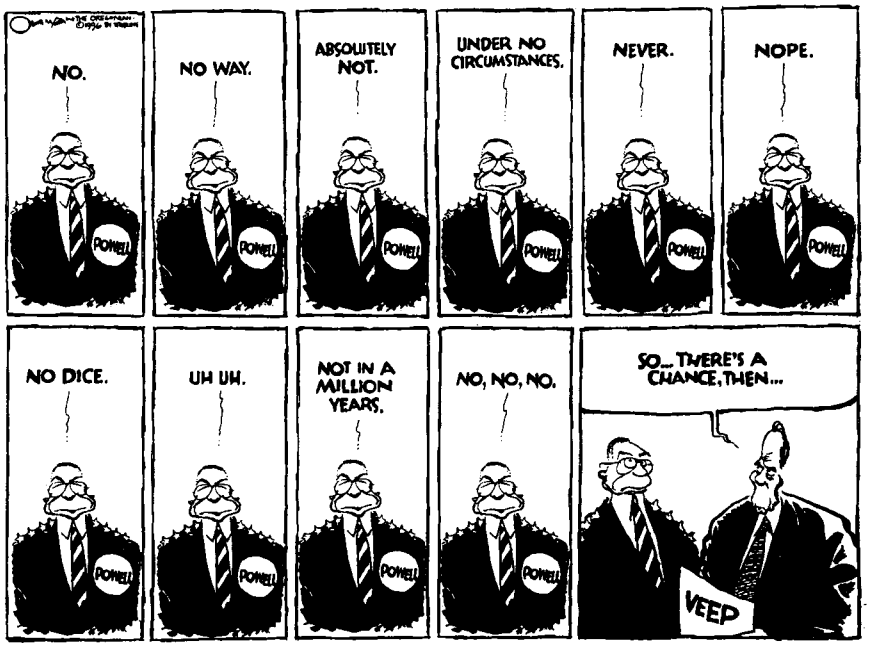
■ Despite an all-out effort on his behalf by the Republican establishment, incumbent Rep. Greg Laughlin, a former Democrat, lost a primary runoff to Ron Paul in Texas's 14th District. Democrats hope that Laughlin's defeat will discourage other officeholders from defecting to the GOP (205 have done so since Bill Clinton's election). But in ex-Congressman Ron Paul, the Libertarian Party candidate for President in 1988, Laughlin faced a tough, well-known, and more conservative opponent. Laughlin is the least conservative congressional Democrat to switch parties so far; he has an anemic 58 lifetime rating from the American Conservative Union, and his voting record proved more important to voters in this conservative district than his spanking new party label. So Mr. Laughlin's failure to make a convincing conversion is unlikely to dissuade desirable conservative Democrats from fleeing across the aisle. Democrats might even the score by tempting undesirable liberal Republicans to join their ranks. *NR* would happily provide the names of Republicans who have shown every sign they'd rather switch than fight.

■ An intriguing thought: If President Clinton is re-elected, will he ride to his Inaugural in a limousine bearing license plates made by Dan Rostenkowski?

■ Economic conservatives are right to like free trade. Pat Buchanan's conservatives-with-a-heart are right to worry about its impact on vulnerable Americans. In our last issue, David Frum proposed a sensible compromise ("Living with Nationalism," p. 22) that answers both concerns: stop mass unskilled immigration. Current mass immigration is virtually worthless to Americans in aggregate, causes serious displacement of native-born workers, and is not at all logically linked to economic growth. Current economic research supports Frum's political case. For example, an article in the May 1996 *American Economic Review* by George Borjas, Richard Freeman, and Larry Katz estimates that 30 to 40 per cent of the recent widening of the wage gap between skilled and unskilled workers is due to trade and immigration—but that immigration is perhaps twice as significant as trade in the calculation. Helping the unskilled begins abroad—by keeping the foreign unskilled there.

■ At least one factor in GOP's 1994 sweep is gone, never to return: the complacency of the other side. The AFL-CIO last month approved a special 15-cent-a-month assessment on its members to help fund a $35-million anti-Republican blitzkrieg this fall. For a foretaste of hypercharged union political activity, consider the special election to fill Bob Packwood's Senate seat last January, where a union field staff of forty, large-scale mailings, and massive independent expenditures on advertising tipped the race to liberal Ron Wyden. Labor—and the feminists and environmentalists—are ready to fight to the death to preserve their threatened federal status quo. Unless the Right creates a countervailing sense of urgency—the kind it mustered when opposing President Clinton's tax increases and health plans—it will be bulldozed right back into righteous opposition. Talking up "divisive" issues like tax cuts, affirmative action, immigration, and crime would be a first step. If Republicans feel guilty about hitting the hot buttons, soon-to-air AFL-CIO attack ads will be just the thing to help them get over it.

■ It used to be a scarlet letter A. Today it's V, for Votetally. Those rankings, by the National Taxpayers Union Foundation, of congressional voting patterns seem to carry quite a stigma for sinners. Consider the shift in voting patterns uncovered in the latest NTU report: The ten congressmen ranked by Votetally as the biggest spenders of 1994 changed course dramatically in 1995; their rankings dropped by an average of 136. The second ten dropped by 76; the third by 72. All in all, declines occurred throughout the top third of the 1994 dis-



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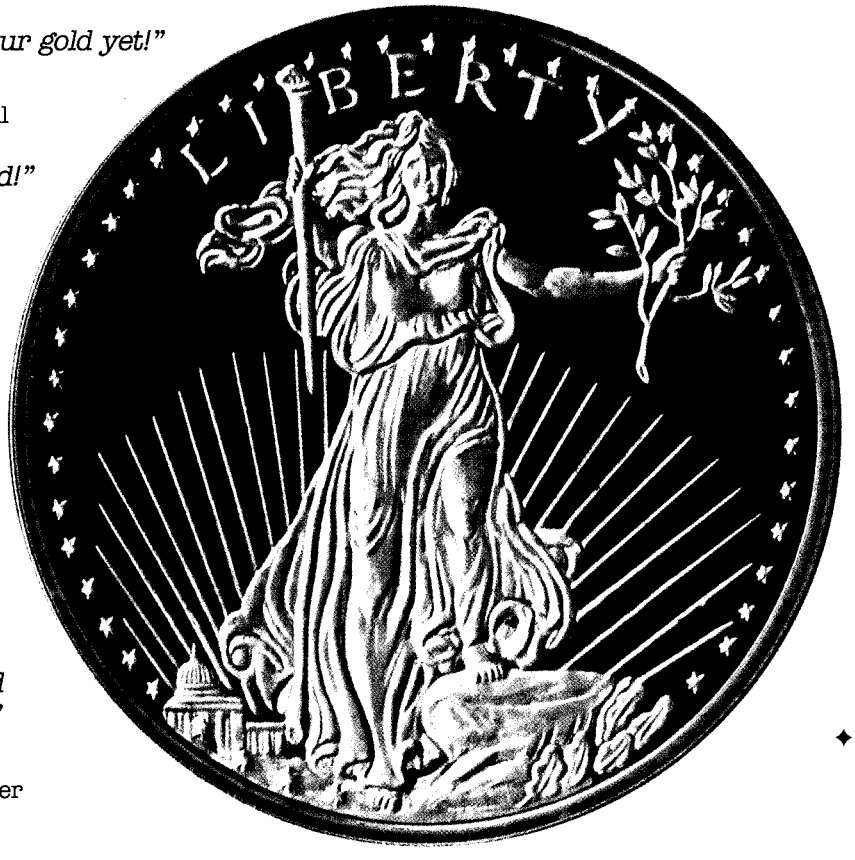

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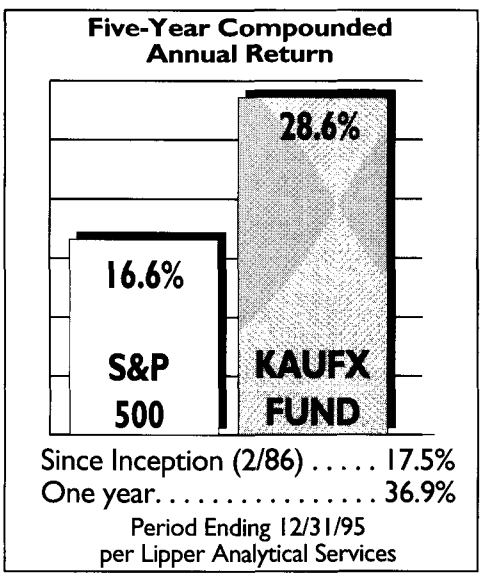

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tribution—a remarkable shift given the institutionally controlled nature of congressional floor votes. Members, chastened by that V on their foreheads, got religion. So why didn't more of the Contract pass? Look waaaay down at the bottom, at the most conservative penny-pinchers of 1994. They moved *up* by an average of 91 places in the 1995 rankings. The backsliding, NTU says, "may reflect an attitude of complacency among those who thought they had done well in the [1994] study." A misapprehension, dispelled by the latest report, not to mention by the status of the Republican agenda.

■ The Clintons paid $75,437 in taxes, not nearly enough to dampen their lust for tax consumption.

■ In the aftermath of Oklahoma City, we discouraged our brethren in the media (to little effect) from portraying Timothy McVeigh as a man of the Right—an only slightly more deranged cousin of Rush and Newt. With the arrest of Theodore Kaczynski, the suspected Unabomber, we similarly resist the temptation to link him to Kirkpatrick Sale or Al Gore. As David Gelernter, one of the bomber's victims and an *NR* contributing editor, wrote in *Time*: "The tendency among some intellectuals and journalists to dignify with analysis the thinking of violent criminals has always struck me as low and contemptible. I couldn't care less what the man's views on technology are or what message he intended to deliver; the message I got was that in any society, no matter how rich, just, and free, you can rely on there being a certain number of evil cowards. I thank him for passing it along, but I knew that anyway."

■ New York Gov. George Pataki has vowed to lead the fight against the Republican platform's pro-life plank in San Diego. He believes the issue has "hurt the Republican Party" and says, "I think it is important that we make it plain that being against abortion is not the position of the Republican Party." This arguably places Gov. Pataki to the left, on this issue, of his predecessor, Mario Cuomo, who at least always maintained he was "personally opposed." For the record, we would favor maintaining the anti-abortion stance even if it cost the party votes. But there is no credible evidence that it does. Polls show that among single-issue voters, pro-lifers outnumber pro-choicers by roughly 2 to 1. Pro-lifers would win any fair intra-party debate on the issue. But San Diego is not the proper place for one: it would turn into a circus ring-mastered not by Republicans but by the media. To fend off that possibility, Gov. Pataki's mentor, Sen. Al D'Amato, who claims to be pro-life, and Bob Dole, whose campaign D'Amato co-chairs, should point out to the governor the political obtuseness of his new position. While they're at it, they should keep an eye on Governors Weld and Whitman, who are also spoiling for a San Diego fight. By supporting President Clinton's veto of the partial-birth-abortion ban, these governors have shown that they are the spokesmen not for a major wing of the GOP, but for an extremist fringe. (Only 15 House Republicans voted against the ban.) Party leaders—and journalists—should treat them accordingly.

■ Public-housing residents, egged on by a couple of Democratic congressmen, picketed the Federal Building in Chicago to protest a bill that would charge them $25 a month for their apartments. It's an outrage! You could buy 25 Lotto tickets for that kind of dough.

■ Even as Congress moved crabwise toward mild but welcome measures against illegal immigration, an incident in Southern California in which police chased and finally stopped a pickup truck carrying 23 illegals made the case for even sterner moves. Though everyone by now has probably seen the videotape of two white police officers beating two illegals while the other illegals fled into the bush, the issue is not really one of "police brutality," much less "racism." The truck had penetrated our porous border and led the police on a wild chase at 100 mph while its occupants flung garbage and metal objects at the pursuers. The videotape records 15 seconds. The chase lasted an hour. The driver of the truck is suing for $10 million, and might get it from the right jury. The fleeing illegals, no kidding, now have six-month residency permits. Thanks to the mass media's bias on immigration, the case has become a second Mylai. The ACLU has seized the opportunity to call for more affirmative-action quotas in police departments. But to most callers to California talk shows, and *NR*, these police officers are not villains but overworked and decent cops who were pushed too far. Their sins are trivial compared to their defense of their country and its laws.

■ Consumer prices took their largest jump in five years in March, and yet there are those who do not believe the Clinton economic policy is doing much.

■ *NR* has never before endorsed candidates in Italy. But if the Center–Right wins the national election on April 21, a contender for the premiership could well be

High Diddle Diddle

If hubby's successful, the Mrs.
Will elbow the cow from the moon.
The fiddle will sign up with ASCAP.
The chopstick will crowd out the spoon.
The little dog (Gore) will die laughing,
Reforesting highway and mall.
The dish will hold condoms Shalala
Puts out for that cat down the hall.

—W. H. VON DREELE

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The Event: NATIONAL REVIEW debates *The Nation*. The topic: "Resolved: Affirmative Action Should Be Abolished." For the affirmative: Dinesh D'Souza and Kate Walsh O'Beirne. For the opposition: Christopher Hitchens and Patricia Williams. When: May 14, 8:00 P.M. Where: Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St., New York City. To order tickets call *NR* at 212-679-7330 (ext. 233).

Antonio Martino, former foreign minister, first-rate economist, and occasional contributor to *NR*. Italy's electoral system forces politicians, Left and Right, to form broad coalitions. The leftists, led by the renamed Communist Party, stand for continuing the old system of welfare and patronage for big business. The Right's most dynamic component is the southern-based National Alliance. Its leader, Gianfranco Fini, is the country's most popular politician, but he is simply too controversial for the premiership. No one expects that the Right's nominal leader, media magnate Silvio Berlusconi, distracted by legal attacks on his media empire and allegations of tax evasion, would be more effective in a new stint as premier than he was in 1994. So, as the most effective spokesman for tax cuts and economic liberalization, Martino could well be the respectable compromise candidate for prime minister. If he won, Italy would instantly become the intellectual leader at gatherings of the G-7 group of heads of state of the industrialized world.

■ In response to a wave of rocket attacks launched by Hezbollah from Lebanon, Israel retaliated—and upped the ante. Israel's troops swept into southern Lebanon to expand the buffer zone, and its planes and gunships destroyed sites in Beirut belonging to Hezbollah and other radical groups. It was the first big Israeli operation in Beirut since the early 1980s. The real culprit here is Syria, which sees periodically giving Hezbollah free rein as a cost-free way of pressuring the Israelis. By humiliating Lebanon (Syria's puppet), the Israelis have demonstrated that it's not so cost-free. With the May election coming, Shimon Peres could do no less.

■ "The readers of the *Boston Evening Transcript*," wrote T. S. Eliot, "sway in the wind like a field of ripe corn." So it is with the writers of the *New York Times*. To celebrate the hundredth anniversary of the Ochs–Sulzberger family's ownership of the paper, the *New York Times Magazine* surveyed the last century, and the resulting excerpts are depressing stuff: soft on tyrants (Herbert L. Matthews on Castro), laggard on freedom, but mostly dull and drab—weather reports on the *Zeitgeist*, as far-sighted as a herd of manatees. The elite would have been better off going to church on Sunday. Or even brunch.

■ The first thing to say about seven-year-old Jessica Dubroff is that she was not a pilot. Nine years short of the minimum legal age to solo an airplane—or for that matter to drive a car—she was a passenger whom an indulgent flight instructor and father had permitted to manipulate controls so that she might appear to break some dubious record for youngsters flying cross-country. Reportedly, Jessica had recently been reading Hillary Clinton's *It Takes a Village*. In her case, a village might have done a better job of raising her than her two earnest, New Age parents. Her mother, Lisa Blair Hathaway, said she raised her children to be people of "freedom and choice." She seems to have assigned absolute worth to these ideals without recognizing that they are prerogatives of adults who have taken life's buffetings; they must be earned. "Children are fearless," she said. "That's their natural state until adults ingrain fear in them." True enough. But she neglected the responsibility of parents to ingrain proper fear; an ordinate sense of one's limitations in the face of the world's dangers defines the mature mind. Miss Hathaway remembers Jessica as a little girl who had lived "a full, wonderful, wonderful, exquisite life." It should have been a much longer one.

■ A weighty tome (417 pages) issued by the National Research Council deserves a lot more attention than it has gotten. Produced by a panel of twenty scientists, the report thoroughly debunks the "natural is healthier" theme that is in such vogue among regulators, activists, and elites generally. The report finds no basis for the notion that synthetic additives, pesticide residues, and byproducts of manufacturing are a significant cancer risk. On the contrary: "It is the naturally occurring compounds in our diet, together with excess fat and calories, that have the greatest effect on cancer causation." The panel found "no notable biological differences between synthetic and naturally occurring carcinogens." But because of the much greater quantity of natural carcinogens in the diet—in cooked meats, cereals, spreads, fruits, vegetables—they deserve the most attention. Seventy common, naturally occurring chemical constituents of food have both cancer-causing and cancer-fighting properties under different conditions and at different concentrations; disease defies simple notions of good and bad. Since most environmentalist health scares—as well as the parallel illusion of the healthiness of the "natural"—trace their ancestry to Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring*, Dr. William M. London, in *Priorities*, the journal of the American Council on Science and Health, has suggested that such alarms be dubbed "Carsonogenic."

■ The California State Supreme Court has delivered itself of a theological finding. Mrs. Evelyn Smith, a Presbyterian landlady, has been sued by a man and a woman who wished to live together and who had at first lied about their marital status. When Mrs. Smith discovered that the couple was not, in fact, married, she said her religion would not permit her to rent them an apartment. The court ruled that Mrs. Smith had violated the couple's right to "freedom from discrimination based on personal characteristics." No mention of Mrs. Smith's right not to be morally affronted in her own home. Marian Johnston,

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50	$ 575	$ 688	$ 888
55	$ 823	$ 1,048	$ 1,360
60	$ 1,273	$ 1,633	$ 2,117
65	$ 2,145	$ 2,670	$ 3,452
70	$ 3,525	$ 4,895	$ 5,863
75	$ 6,155	$ 7,837	$10,774
80	$10,309	$12,394	$12,394

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triumphant attorney for the unmarried pair (who have since split up), offered an illuminating interpretation of the decision: "We're not precluding [Mrs. Smith] from exercising her religion. We're just saying she can't bring it with her into the business world." In the opinion of the highest court in the nation's largest state, religion must be reduced to an emasculated cultural habit with no relevance to the actual conduct of people's lives. We don't care what you believe, so long as it's nothing.

■ Having trouble understanding your college kid? Here's how to sort it out. A "BUG" is Bisexual Until Graduation and wants to sample the entire campus experience. "GUGs" and "LUGs" are, respectively, Gay and Lesbian Until Graduation, and on the fast track. "Hets" are straight but can't talk about it because it is uncool. "Parents" are people who want to hide in the garage and cry.

Story Conference

IN THE interval between Easter and Pentecost, the Christian story occupies the thoughts of Christians —and of many heathens—as witness the decision of major newsweeklies to put Jesus' face on their covers Easter week.

For a hundred years, the credibility of that story has been assailed by two broad arguments: 1) Creation, and a Creator, are false or, at best, unnecessary concepts. Life as we know it is simply a random by-product of the same forces that (in Bertrand Russell's limpid words) "rust iron and ripen corn." 2) The Resurrection is a myth, the fevered downloading of first-century Palestinian e-mail.

Yet in the last few decades, both arguments have themselves had their credibility undermined.

Right Data

AS Pat Buchanan sees it, free trade is great for corporations and financial elites, but devastating for Joe Six-pack. "We just lost 2.2 million jobs last year," he said when 1995's trade deficit was announced.

In fact, when the trade deficit exploded in the 1980s, the U.S. unemployment rate fell from 9.7 per cent to just above 5 per cent. Conversely, a rapidly shrinking deficit in 1991 coincided with higher unemployment and lower real incomes. Last year, once again, a higher deficit signaled lower unemployment. This is not to say that one thing causes the other; rather, the increased income that goes with higher employment increases imports, leading to a higher trade imbalance.

Obviously, trade hurts some workers. University of Maryland economist Margaret McCarthy estimates that imports displace 11.4 million jobs, while exports create 10 million. The net loss—1.4 million jobs—represents about 1 per cent of total U.S. employment. But this doesn't mean that protectionism would increase total employment. Foreign competition keeps prices down and spurs technological change. It acts as a restraint on government. Such benefits accrue to the entire economy, not just the (relatively small) part engaged in foreign trade.

The link is well documented. Harvard economists Jeffrey Sachs and Andrew Warner found "a strong association" between free trade and growth. Their study tracked 79 countries over the period 1970 to 1990. Among their findings: free-traders grew an average of 2.5 per cent per year faster than closed economies, and countries that removed trade restrictions saw growth climb by 1 percentage point per year. Another recent study finds that a 10-percentage-point rise in U.S. tariffs, if maintained for the 10-year period through 1994, would have reduced that year's per-capita GDP ($26,558 in current dollars) by $500. Even barriers directed against predatory trade practices do more harm than good. There were, for example, 163 anti-dumping duties in place in 1991. A recent study found they reduce U.S. income by $1.6 billion—after considering the gain to the protected industries.

A GOOD DEFICIT:
TRADE, EMPLOYMENT, AND INCOME

	U.S. Trade Deficit		Unemployment	GDP Per
	$ Bil.	% of GDP	Rate	Capita (1992$)
1982	$24.2	0.7%	9.7%	$19,911
1987	152.7	3.3	6.2	23,260
1989	91.4	1.7	5.3	24,497
1991	29.4	0.5	6.7	24,058
1994	106.2	1.5	6.1	25,335
1995	111.0	1.5	5.6	25,610

Skeptics say that free trade hurts the poor even as it raises total income. They point out that high-school dropouts suffered an 18 per cent decline in real earnings between 1980 and 1994. Over that same period imports rose as a percentage of GDP. Are the trends related? In theory, imports from Mexico, China, and other low-wage countries should force unskilled American workers to accept lower wages. But if trade is the main culprit, companies that don't face foreign competition should be taking advantage of cheaper unskilled labor by hiring more. In fact, we see the opposite. Employment of high-school dropouts in industries unaffected by trade fell from 36 per cent of total payroll in 1969 to 13 per cent in 1993.

Most studies conclude that trade is, at most, a small factor in income distribution. This is not surprising. We import relatively little from countries with low wages. In 1990, 70 per cent of American imports came from Japan and Western Europe, nations with wage levels similar to our own.

So why the widening wage gap? The dominant cause appears to be technological change, especially the role of computers in raising the demand for skilled workers, coupled with a decline in the relative supply of college graduates. There is also widening income inequality among individuals in the same occupation who would once have collected virtually identical salaries. To a large extent, this "gap" reflects the greater productivity of the higher earners. It certainly has nothing to do with trade.

—ED RUBENSTEIN

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Reagan Legacy in Jeopardy.

Government to Kill Free TV?

By Alfred C. Sikes

With the ink on the Telecommunications Reform Act barely dry, Congress has begun to consider a truly ill-advised action that would imperil the competitive balance in the broadcast industry and undermine some of the positive effects of the landmark legislation just enacted into law.

Hearings are being held on a proposal to immediately auction off the portion of the nation's airwaves designated for the transition to advanced television, a step that, if taken, could result in the demise of free television in our nation. If Congress ultimately requires such an auction, it will prevent broadcasters from making an orderly transition from the current system of analog television to advanced, digital television. Should this occur, free television will eventually become obsolete and instead of having the option of buying television services, viewers will be forced to pay cable, or telephone, or satellite companies for the privilege of viewing state-of-the-art TV.

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Allowing broadcasters the opportunity to better serve the public by remaining technologically competitive was the goal of a process initiated in the Reagan Administration as it became clear that the industry was on the verge of seismic changes in technology and quality. As part of that process in 1991, and with broad bipartisan support from Congress and the Bush Administration, the Federal Communications Commission, which I then chaired, developed a specific plan to allow broadcasters to transition from the analog to the digital world.

To make an orderly transition possible, we decided to temporarily provide broadcasters the spectrum needed to simultaneously air programming in both analog and digital formats so the public would not face a sudden loss of television service. After the transition period was completed, the broadcasters were to return the original spectrum to the government for auction. If broadcasters are forced to immediately transmit digital signals without a transition period, every TV in America would go dark. Using today's market as a measuring stick, if every TV was then replaced with a new digital set or a converter to translate the digital signal into an analog one, the public overnight would receive a bill for tens of billions of dollars at a minimum.

The existing transition process has proceeded, and succeeded, for nearly a decade. Relying on the assurances of spectrum availability for a transition period, the TV industry responded with the massive allocation of resources needed to bring digital television to life. Since 1985, hundreds of millions of dollars have been spent by business on research and development, plant and equipment, human resources and testing facilities. Unlike Japan, where the government spent billions of yen to initiate what is now an obsolete high-definition TV system, the U.S. government has not spent a nickel.

Not content to leave well enough alone, some in Congress are now challenging the decade-old promises and resulting process as a giveaway of valuable spectrum. In the never-ending search for new Federal revenues to reduce their need to cut spending, they are promoting the idea of an immediate auction of the portion of spectrum that has been temporarily reserved for the transition to digital television.

The impulse is understandable, the policy wrong-headed. Not only should the government keep its promises, but it should also seek an orderly and quick transition from a spectrum-hungry analog transmission system to an efficient, digital one. Talk about a win-win. The public gets much better television services and, in not too many years, a much more valuable block of spectrum to auction. While it isn't possible to put a price on what might be paid today for the patchwork of spectrum now reserved for loan to broadcasters, it is clear that the contiguous block of spectrum to be reclaimed in the future would be much more valuable.

But by far the worst consequence of an immediate auction would be to throw the broadcast industry on the junk pile. In a wide-open auction, broadcasters would face a harsh economic reality. The phone companies and other providers could use the spectrum for immediate returns and the broadcasters couldn't. The broadcasters' first requirement will be to build a new transmission plant alongside its current one and broadcast the exact same programming, but in digital code. While in time broadcasters will be able to develop new digital services that will not interfere with their first requirement, TV, those new services and associated revenues will not come quickly. And, failing to win the auction, broadcasters would find themselves figuratively tethered to an analog signal that will look increasingly antiquated. In a high-tech world, low tech loses.

At its end, the current process will leave broadcasters no more spectrum than they now have. In fact, advances in digital compression will lead to more efficient spectrum utilization. For that reason, those who see a giveaway to broadcasters have got the issue exactly backwards. Altering the plan in favor of an immediate auction would actually be a taking of the broadcasters' right to exist. How ironic it is that as the government seeks to dismantle barriers that have prevented cable television and telephone companies from operating in new communications arenas, auctions would be used to erect a barrier that would bar broadcasters from providing the free services they have delivered for decades. Government policy should not undermine free broadcasting in favor of pay services offered by cable, phone and satellite companies.

There is much to be lost, and nothing to be gained, by abandoning the orderly process we created a decade ago. Congress should resist the calls to change the rules in the middle of this game. If it doesn't, the American people will, quite literally, pay the price.

Alfred C. Sikes, President of Hearst New Media & Technology, was Chairman of the Federal Communications Commission from 1989-93.

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Patrick Glynn ("Beyond the Death of God," p. 28) reports on the evolution (if one may put it that way) of the Anthropic Principle—the dawning awareness among physicists that the mechanisms which permit a stable, life-hospitable universe are so delicately balanced as to suggest that the universe must have been designed with life in mind. The target was so incredibly tiny that Someone must have been aiming to hit it.

E. P. Sanders in the London *Spectator* ("But Did It Happen?" April 6) surveys the consensus of modern Biblical scholarship: that all the testimonies of Jesus' life (the Gospels, Acts, I Corinthians) were written within the lifetime of His younger contemporaries, not decades—let alone centuries—later; and that they were written about Something. "I think the Christian leaders really experienced the appearance of Jesus after his execution. More precisely, they experienced what they called 'the resurrection,' but we cannot say what it was. In fact, neither could they. It is this that seems best to account for the[ir] competing stories. They wanted to describe something that they could not define and describe precisely, and so various people tried their hands at various stories, making up details in the effort to say something concrete."

St. Paul, in the earliest surviving mention of the resurrection (about A.D. 55, or 25 years after the event), offered the least specific, and most sweeping, account: "For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures: And that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. After that, he was seen of James; then of all the apostles. And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time. . . . And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain."

And if Christ be risen, then so many of the doctrines of our era, which have proved themselves horrible—Communism, Fascism, Existentialism—are also vain.

Irangate Again

THE *Los Angeles Times* reported on April 5 that President Clinton gave a green light to covert Iranian weapons shipments to Bosnia in 1994, at a time when he was officially insisting on maintaining the UN arms embargo and fending off Republican efforts to send American weapons. It seems that Croatian President Franjo Tudjman had asked the U.S. in early 1994 about setting up a secret pipeline for Iranian arms through Croatia, and the U.S.—after deliberation at the highest level—told him there was no objection.

This is an extraordinary revelation. Most of the weaknesses of the Administration's Bosnia policy from 1993 onward stemmed from its failure to bolster the Bosnians, who were reeling under a Serb onslaught that had captured 70 per cent of the country's territory. No decent or lasting settlement was conceivable so long as this imbalance of forces—perpetuated by the UN arms embargo—lasted. The imbalance was redressed last year only by a ground offensive by the Croatian army and more vigorous U.S. military intervention from the air.

The presence of Iranian weapons and "freedom fighters" was generally known, and bad enough—but it had appeared that they were only filling the vacuum left by our refusal to help the Bosnians ourselves. That the U.S. *consented* to this Iranian presence is, in the choice words of former Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger, "the height of insanity." As of now, the Iranians have not yet left (as they were supposed to do under the Dayton accords). The Administration continues to drag its feet on arming and training the Bosnians, despite promises the President made to Congress at the time of Dayton. The Bosnians are using the Iranians as leverage over us as the clock runs on the Administration's self-imposed one-year deadline for troop withdrawal.

The Administration's deception of Congress brings to mind the Reagan Administration's blunder of selling arms to the ayatollahs. But this is worse: Ollie North only sent a few antitank missiles that had no significant impact on the Iran–Iraq battlefield. Bill Clinton—lately portraying himself as a foreign-policy genius—has given the ayatollahs a strategic foothold in Europe. Sen. Dole is right to call for a congressional investigation.

Shotgun Marriage

THE gay lobby and the judiciary of the Aloha State are combining to present the country with a *fait accompli* of gay marriage.

In 1993, the Supreme Court of Hawaii ruled, on a suit brought by the Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund, that the sex-discrimination language of the state

Airbus Wins, Boeing Loses

The French, adept at playing dumb,
Quit China with a tidy sum
By raising glasses in a toast
That had been censored by their host.
Though all is fair in love and war
(De Grasse once gave the Brits what for),
Au fond, *their diplomatic moves*
Slide slickly in commercial grooves.

—W. H. VON DREELE

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constitution permitted gay marriage, unless the state could show a "compelling interest" why it should be forbidden. "Permitted," in this case, was used in its judicial sense—no one in Hawaii had *intended* the state constitution to have that meaning, but an inventive judge could tease it out.

The state Supreme Court has sent the case back to a lower court, and so the state has a chance to make its last, forlorn arguments ("compelling interest" is notoriously hard to prove). If the state fails, then—Lambda hopes—the rest of the Union will be obliged to honor Hawaii's gay marriages under the clause of the Constitution that directs the states to give "full faith and credit" to one another's "public acts, records, and judicial proceedings."

Lambda's reasons for picking Hawaii to make its back-door legal break-in are interesting. Hawaii is ethnically diverse (hence being gay, it could be argued, is "just like" being a Nisei); it is a Democratic one-party state; less than half of Hawaiians are affiliated with any form of Christianity, and so there would not be a large home-grown Religious Right. Polls show that 70 per cent of Hawaiians are opposed to gay marriage nevertheless, but the social factors weighed by Lambda may make it politically hard for the state constitution to be amended before the judges finish doing their thing.

Throughout the history of Judaism, Christianity, and civilization in Europe, marriage has meant the union of one man and one woman. In cultures where multiple marriages of various sorts have been the norm, they have been heterosexual. The reasons are obvious: families exist to raise children, and every human is the offspring of a man and a woman. Gay marriage violates popular opinion, history, and human nature. No wonder the courts have taken it up.

The Week in Verse

The Ides of April past, the world relaxes
But pays attention when it pays its taxes
To politicians fleetingly concern'd
That folks pay nearly half of what they've earn'd.
This year again *Newt* offered his solution
In an amendment to the *Constitution*
Requiring two-thirds vote a tax to raise—
Yet more than one-third voted with the nays.
If bound to lose, why not instead that day
Vote that we *cut* the damn things anyway?
The good news was, the item veto's law;
The bad news, that the man from *Arkansas*
Is still the President—and, say the polls,
Will not be gone through any strength of *Dole's*.

But what the heck! He's now so strong of will
He'll soon be known as *Terrorism Bill*!
(Already tough with babies, or a portion
He's kept subject to partial-birth abortion.)
The *FBI* the *Unabomber* chas'd
To ground in far *Montana's* snowy waste.
Snatch'd from his fire and plumbing-in-a-pail,
He'll do hard time, I'm sure, in some new jail.
But if you've tears, prepare to shed them now
As *Rostenkowski* enters the hoosegow.
For sev'nteen months he'll see familiar scenes
By few if any Ways and by no Means.
D'Amato, hoping he could do the same
For Bigger Fish, was thwarted of his game
By *Democrats*. *Whitewater's* in the tank?
Not quite. He'll angle for them from the *Bank*.

The President's *bien-pensant* peace program
Was turn'd down by *Korea's Kim Young-sam*
As many others were turned down before,
Although few think there'll be another war—
Unless it turns out *Kim* has got the wit
To guess if *Bill*'s more like to fight or quit.

—Juvenal

School's Out to Lunch

DESPITE assurances from Arthur Schlesinger Jr. and Diane Ravitch in the *Wall Street Journal*—assurances that amount to being grateful for small mercies—the revised national history standards for high schools should not be accepted as a model by the states. Some overtly biased language has been eliminated, and new material on science, technology, and the Cold War has been included. But the basic left-wing structure of the document—written primarily by revisionist historian Gary Nash (the organizer of the Angela Davis Defense Committee in the Seventies)—remains intact.

Multiculturalism dominates the standards. They declare that the United States is the result of a "historical convergence" of "Native American, African, and European cultures" to create a "composite American society." This would have been news to the American colonists—who were about 90 per cent Protestant and three-fourths British—not to mention the Indians.

Left-wing editorializing permeates the standards. One example, among hundreds: "Students cannot fully understand the Progressive movement without considering its limitations, particularly its antagonism to radical labor movements." In other words, the Progressives weren't left-wing enough. They were "limited" by their "antagonism" to, e.g., the Wobblies and the anarchists, who wanted to overthrow the Republic.

The world-history section is perhaps even more biased. For the period A.D. 300 to 1500 (Constantine to Columbus) 135 of the revised standards deal with the non-West and only 56 with the West. There is no mention of the natural law or the common law or the ideas of Augustine or Aquinas. Students are not asked to explain the significance of the fall of the Roman empire; instead they are asked to "analyze how complex social structures,

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religions, and states developed in Oceania" and "infer from archaeological evidence the importance of Jennejeno or Kumbi-Saleh as early West African commercial cities."

For conservatives and centrists to accept these revised standards as a model would be to surrender to what Professor James Kurth calls the "post-West." These standards represent "two steps forward, one step back" for the multiculturalists. At the end of the day the multicultural position has advanced one step.

Ron Brown, RIP

RON BROWN'S death while on an official mission was a loss to the Administration he served and to his family, and dying in a plane crash in the Balkans imparts a special luster to all that came before. But the Beltway apotheosis was overblown.

Mr. Brown's eulogists, beginning with President Clinton, seemed at times to be speaking of Martin Luther King Jr. or Thurgood Marshall. The real Ron Brown was one step ahead of an independent counsel investigating his convoluted business dealings, and his death may well have spared him and the President the embarrassment of another forced resignation. He was an energetic commerce secretary, a vigorous partisan, and an amiable man, but his career was a familiar one in today's Washington: he was an activist who used his connections to make a lot of money, apparently cutting many corners along the way.

It is inconceivable that the media would have treated anyone but a black Democrat quite as they treated Ron Brown. (Malcolm Baldrige, a Republican commerce secretary who died in a rodeo accident, was accorded no such lamentations.) The failure of the media and the President to apply normal standards was, in fact, an act of racial condescension. Mr. Brown's death (bitter)sweetens his life, but does not erase it.

NOTES & ASIDES

■ Dear Mr. Buckley:

I sought God for his wisdom and He referred me to you for yours. What is a well-read, red-white-and-blue-blooded conservative bachelor to do when he finally falls in love, but with an intractable bleeding-heart liberal? Can love truly conquer all, even ignorance?

Respectfully yours,
Brett M. Decker
Royal Oak, Mich.

Dear Mr. Decker: Well . . . er, just *how* ignorant? Can she read? Advise. Cordially, WFB

■ Dear Mr. Buckley:

A few of the team names suggested by Mr. Erskine ["Notes & Asides," March 25], though alluringly alliterative, lack specificity. I would suggest the following alternatives:

1) Washington Taxes
2) Chicago Chills
3) Florida Orange Blossoms
4) Houston Brags

Perhaps we could move the Washington team to California, rename them the Fruits & Nuts, and get rid of the Taxes.

Sincerely,
Charles H. King Jr.
DeFuniak Springs, Fla.

■ Dear Mr. Buckley:

It is one of my goals in my personal and professional life is [you already said *is*] to find my name on the inside of NATIONAL REVIEW—I hope as a writer someday [some day] for you [No. A writer "for" somebody is a speech, script, or gag writer] and your superior magazine, but for now, I have the intermediate goal of attempting to express myself in your Notes & Asides page. Any editorial help you can give me would be greatly appreciated.

Dear Mr. Buckley:

I have a way to save America from the continued ravages of liberalism and it is such a brilliant and simple idea, [no comma] that I am surprised none of your readers, most of which [of whom] for obvious reasons would hold positions of superior intellect and business acumen [Why should this be obvious? And you do not "hold" a position of superior intellect, nor a position of acumen. Try, Most of whom, I assume are of superior intellect and business acumen], had not suggested it earlier [has suggested it earlier] through this venue.

We have each current subscribing member of the NATIONAL REVIEW [Let each subscriber to NATIONAL REVIEW] not just submit to you a prepaid subscription of NATIONAL REVIEW as a gift for a friend [not only send in a prepaid subscription to NATIONAL REVIEW as a gift for a friend]—as your superb magazine rightfully [rightly] often advertises [often urges us to do]—but we make sure we send the gift subscription to our most liberal of friend(s) [but we send a gift subscription to our most liberal friend(s)]. The eloquence and power of the intellectual arguments within each subscription of NATIONAL REVIEW [within each issue of NATIONAL REVIEW] could not help but penetrate the thickest of liberal mindsets [could not help penetrating even the thickest of liberal mindsets].

Respectfully yours,
Robert W. Freniere
South Hadley, Mass.

Dear Mr. Freniere: That's a terrific idea. And glad to help on the diction. Keep it up! Gratefully, **—WFB**

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CAPITAL SCENE

Staking Out the Center

RICH LOWRY

Roman Genn

WASHINGTON, D.C.

FOUR years ago the Labour Party was calling for an official inquiry into the concentration of media ownership in Britain. And understandably so. The right-wing press—a good chunk of it owned by Rupert Murdoch—had beat the party's brains out during the 1992 campaign. So at first it seemed odd to see new Labour leader Tony Blair schmoozing the conservative Murdoch. He traveled to Australia last July to address a meeting of Murdoch executives and emphasized his common ground with the media mogul. He has become almost a regular contributor to right-wing tabloid *The Sun*. Media concentration? With Parliament set recently to take up a broadcasting bill, Labour was prepared to drop its earlier insistence on regulations that could have crimped the likes of Murdoch.

Tony Blair's footsie with Rupert Murdoch is just one instance of the savvy maneuvering that has made him the hottest commodity on the international if-you-can't-beat-them-join-them Left.

Mr. Lowry is NR's national political reporter.

Since becoming the Labour Party leader in July 1994, Blair has taken a party that has been out of power for 17 years, exorcised its leftist demons (or so it seems) and steered it to a commanding 30 per cent lead in the polls heading toward the next election, which must be called by May 1997. For the moment, his every gambit seems destined to hit paydirt. When he spoke at the Labour Party conference last year, the once implacably hostile *Sun* gushed: "surely the most remarkable speech ever made to a Labour conference."

Blair brought his show to Washington in early April to the delight of the city's establishment. Sydney Blumenthal (who had just finished slobbering over Blair in *The New Yorker*) hosted a cocktail party, and high-ranking Administration officials opened their doors. Blair spent forty minutes with the President himself, reinforcing a budding transatlantic relationship. The two are almost clones. They were near contemporaries at Oxford and are still young enough to seem hip (Clinton has his saxophone, Blair his acoustic guitar). They both have moderated their parties and sought to appeal to the broader middle class, often in identical language. In a trademark Clinton line, Blair talks of a Labour Party in touch with "people who want to work hard, get on, play by the rules." Clinton refers to himself as a "New Democrat"; Blair calls his party "New Labour."

Blair, 43 years old, has Dan Quayle blue eyes and such a youthful look that the Tories at first dubbed him "Bambi." His hair is shaggy enough to make him slightly reminiscent of a 1980s rock star. He smiles often. In fact, his presence is so soothing that the only false note is that it is *too* soothing. Some critics dismiss Blair as a mere PR front. But he is much more. Blair and Clinton are at the forefront of an effort to create a new Western liberalism, shorn of its hard edges, anodyne enough to go places the old version can't. Blair represents a Left that dare not speak its name—and for that very reason is anticipating an electoral revival.

Blair has undertaken internal reforms of the Labour Party with ruthless efficiency. Last year, he won a historic battle to strip its charter of Clause IV, an antiquated socialist call to arms. Meanwhile, he is working to make his party invulnerable from the right on values and social issues. He coined the now-famous Clintonesque slogan to describe his party's position on criminal justice: "tough on crime and tough on the causes of crime." He has adopted the same tack on welfare, and wraps himself in the robes of religion to an extraordinary extent for a British politician. "He talks about the importance of obligation, the commitment to society," says Gerald Frost, former director of the Thatcherite Center for Policy Studies. "Some of it sounds a bit like it might come from Burke."

But what exactly does New Labour mean? This gets tricky. Blair once described his approach as "principle without particular policy prescriptions." In the 1992 election Labour outlined enough programmatic specifics that the Tories were able to do some math and maintain, plausibly, that it all would mean higher taxes. Blair learned the lesson. When the Tories attacked Labour for proposing back-door taxes, he dropped a proposed new training levy on business. When conservatives knocked raising the minimum wage, Blair simply refused to say how high he would make it. The heart of the New Labour program is another nice-sounding, if ill-defined, slogan: the "stakeholder economy."

THE animating idea is to make corporations responsive to the workers and communities that depend on them rather than just to financial markets. Stakeholding has its roots in Christian socialism, and Blair contrasts its recognition of values higher than the bottom line with the alleged crass materialism of Thatcherism. Labour argues too that successful corporations already take into account wide-ranging stakeholders. Which nicely bridges the traditional gap between Labour's ideals and cold economics. "[Blair] is arguing social cohesion is necessary for economic growth," says a

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Tory official, "and that is the formula that Labour has always used when it has been successful."

But, at worst, stakeholding would entail nationalization by other means. Instead of the state exercising power over corporate decision-making it would be the "community," i.e., Labour-sanctioned interest groups like trade unions and environmentalists. Instead of socialistic control being concentrated in the central government it would be spread throughout the economy, from boardroom to boardroom. "It's potentially as, if not more, intrusive [than nationalization]," warns one British observer. "The Left nowadays knows that you . . . can accomplish the same egalitarian ends by severely constraining the market through regulation." Critics call the Labour program the nationalization of people instead of companies, as individuals are subsumed by their officially designated communities.

The idea is echoed in the Clinton Administration's—so far, just as vague—talk of "corporate responsibility." Congressional Democrats have, on their own, fleshed out a detailed program that is clearly back-door statism. The problem is that as long as Clinton and Blair keep their stakeholding idea general there is little to attack. The Tories will argue that Labour has it backwards, that it is vigorous growth that makes social cohesion possible. But this argument has limits. "If Blair promises the voters safety," asks one British journalist, "what do the Tories say in response, 'No, um, we're offering you peril'?" The way to put "clear blue water," as the Tories call it, between themselves and Labour would have been a far-reaching tax cut. But John Major has refused to cut the size of government enough to make this possible.

The Tory hope is that Blair, once in office, won't be able to govern. Here, Clinton provides ample precedent. "Clinton found himself," says Democratic Leadership Council head Will Marshall, "in a position not unlike that which Gorbachev found himself in—a modernizer, somebody who wanted to . . . reform, but the vehicle for change was this party that had every incentive not to change." Once Blair is elected, the desperation to win that has so far kept his Left quiet disappears. "You can't be right-wing on the Left," maintains a Tory official. "Whereas there are some people in Blair's camp who want to change the Labour Party, there are not very many. And the result of it is always going to be that he is ultimately going to fall on a left strategy."

Which raises another difficulty: policy details. Nothing hurt Clinton so much as having to enshrine his party's priorities in specifics, which created a GOP free-fire zone on issues ranging from employer mandates to the BTU tax. Clinton's rebound came only when a GOP Congress relieved him of the duty of governing. So too, Blair's honeymoon may end the first day he has to produce something more concrete than a winning smile. He still confronts a fundamental conundrum: measures that please his party are likely to anger the public and vice versa. It is this tension that makes New Democrat/New Labour governing so elusive. In his current book, *Washington Post* columnist E. J. Dionne argues "that the problem with Clintonism was that, in the Administration's first two years at least, it was never really tried." It may be that it never is—on either side of the Atlantic. □

Serious Missile Defense

ANGELO M. CODEVILLA

WASHINGTON, D.C.

As Congress begins to write the budgets and the rules that will determine whether the U.S. will finally acquire the capacity to destroy even one ballistic missile heading our way, it should keep in mind that missile defense may be most useful not in doomsday scenarios but in preventing ordinary crises from turning into nightmares.

When the Chinese government bracketed Taiwan with missiles and told America to keep its nose out of Asian affairs if it did not want to lose Los Angeles, the U.S. Government sent a fleet while hoping that the Chinese were not serious. The alternative was to abandon the *pax americana* in the Pacific. But if the U.S. Government had possessed the capacity to intercept ballistic missiles fired at Taiwan—or at Los Angeles—the situation would not have been so tense. Since the Chinese missiles would have become impotent, the Chinese would not have brandished them and might not even have built them.

It is not news that the Clinton Administration is stuck in the ideological swamps of the 1960s, and that it is determined to de-fund, delay, or de-fang any American anti-missile device that seems ready to go into production by invoking the U.S.–Soviet Anti-Ballistic-Missile treaty of 1972. Thus the Administration disregarded the 1996 Defense Authorization Act—negotiated with congressional Republicans and signed by the President—that provided for work on a variety of anti-missile systems: SMTS, Upper Tier, THAAD, the Space Based Laser. Instead, it would slow down every one of these programs. In addition, the Administration wants to limit the speed of our interceptor rockets and to prohibit any interceptor that works against fast warheads. Already last year it had dumbed down THAAD and Upper Tier by prohibiting their full use of data from external sensors.

The real question is whether congressional Republicans will answer these slaps in the face with deeds or with face-saving words. So far the emergence of Bob Dole as the Republican nominee seems to be bringing back the pusillanimous cleverness of the Bush Administration. The Defend America Act of 1996, introduced by Sen. Dole on March 21, calls for anti-missile defenses by 2003 but contains no funding for actual weapons. The bill does not even attempt to force the Administration to follow current law, much less to reverse a host of Clintonian administrative restrictions on our defense programs. It is Bubba bait.

Despite Republican timidity on the issue, the usefulness of ballistic missiles in international disputes—and thus the need for missile defense—is only becoming clearer. After the Gulf War, Saddam Hussein himself avowed that if his missiles had been able to reach Washington, he would have sent them there just as he sent them against Tel Aviv. Muammar Qaddafi has promised to build (more probably buy) missiles that could reach New York. In fact, just about anyone who wants to pose fearful choices to Americans now believes that a missile can do it.

Mr. Codevilla is a professor at Boston University.

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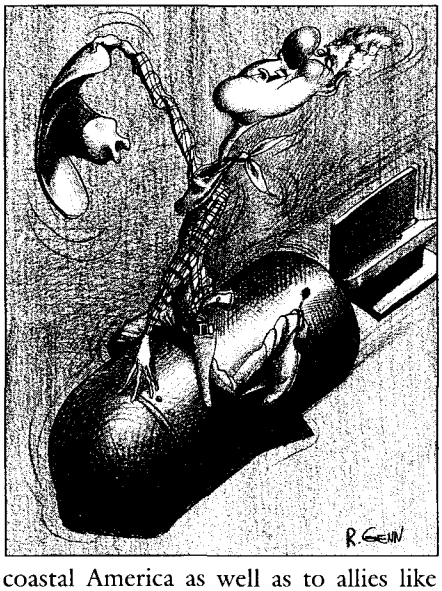
In Fulton, Missouri, on the fiftieth anniversary of Winston Churchill's Iron Curtain speech, Margaret Thatcher urged the West to "install ballistic-missile defenses" because we cannot expect that deterrence will always work. Protecting ourselves, she said, is essential for the credibility of our diplomacy. Without defenses for American soil, we must be cautious about angering any dictator who might have bought or produced long-range missiles. Nor can we send unprotected troops where they are likely to be targets for missiles.

Just as important, the U.S. Government's capacity to provide anti-missile protection to various countries around the world will be the key to our ability to keep the peace. If we do not provide that protection, they may well seek it in ways detrimental to our interests. Even now Japan worries about Korean missiles, Taiwan worries about Chinese missiles, Pakistan worries about the new Indian missiles, Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states worry about both Iran's new missiles and Iraq's old ones, and Europe worries about missiles from any number of Islamic radicals. Israel worries about everybody's missiles, and so should we. Nor must we forget that any part of the Soviet missile force could be turned against us without notice.

There is no such thing as missile defense in general. Each defensive weapon has peculiar characteristics, and therefore is more useful for some tasks than for others. Most of the anti-missile weapons now under development would be based on the surface of the earth near the targets that ballistic missiles might attack. The Patriot PAC-3, successor to the weapon of the Gulf War, intercepts inside the atmosphere, close to the target. The Army's THAAD has a radar that sees farther, and an optically guided interceptor that is supposed to hit the warhead on the edge of the atmosphere. The Navy's Upper Tier system relies on the radar of existing AEGIS air-defense ships and on a very fast, optically guided interceptor that hits the warhead well outside the atmosphere. All such systems are vastly more effective when they don't have to wait until their own radars lock onto the warhead, but rather can launch on cues from satellites.

How useful are such weapons? A battery of PAC-3s with a dozen interceptors using information from space could protect a few square miles against a half-dozen warheads. This means that a few dozen batteries could protect sizable U.S. military forces on hostile shores. Since soldiers are usually protected against debris from warheads and missiles intercepted overhead, the Patriot's close-by interception is sufficient. But no amount of Patriots could protect sprawling, unfortified populations. To do that, the intercepts must occur far enough away that nuclear, chemical, or biological residues do not fall on the targets. Again, assuming accurate data from satellites, the THAAD system could intercept over a hundred miles away from cities, and Navy Upper Tier could intercept well over a thousand miles away.

That is why the Navy's tentative plans for equipping 22 AEGIS ships with 650 Upper Tier interceptors are so important. Upper Tier interceptors would provide considerable protection to coastal America as well as to allies like Japan, parts of Europe, and Israel.



Roman Genn

Rushing anti-missile devices to threatened places—like Los Angeles, or to Israel and Saudi Arabia during the Gulf War—is a chore. Each PAC-3 battery, minus support units, would take at least two of America's biggest transport aircraft. Moving each THAAD battery would take at least four. Nevertheless, if the targets to be defended are small or few, and if the incoming warheads are neither too fast nor too numerous, such defenses can be meaningful.

Shooting at missiles soon after launch, while their engines are boosting, reduces the need to rush equipment around the world to cover changing threats, and eliminates the worry that the equipment sent to any given place might not match the kind of missile that would actually be launched against it. The U.S. Government has only one serious program for hitting missiles during boost phase, the space-based laser. A dozen SBLs would cover all parts of the earth from which missiles might be launched. Each would carry enough fuel to destroy several hundred missiles. Admiral William Owens, the retiring vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, has called the SBL "the brass ring." In 1995, the Lockheed Martin and TRW corporations wrote the Senate Armed Services Committee that they could place a test version in orbit before the end of 1998.

The case of Israel shows why a space-based defense is essential. The (joint U.S.–Israeli) Arrow interceptor is between PAC-3 and THAAD in potency and is likely to defend well against reasonably sophisticated warheads. Israel will also acquire a set of small remotely piloted planes that will carry rockets intended to intercept missiles after lift-off from nearby countries. Israel is even getting (from us) a ground-based, low-power version of the space-based laser for defending against the artillery rockets from Lebanon that have devastated northern Galilee for so long. Moreover, Israel's accessibility by sea makes protection by a U.S. Navy Upper Tier system feasible. But it is increasingly clear that, useful as these devices are, they cannot contend with fast missiles launched from non-front-line states. Only American space-based lasers could solve Israel's missile-defense problems—as well as our own.

As always, the battle for money and for specifications is being fought in the committees on Armed Services and Appropriations. Congress has the power to write provisions that specify what defense contractors are to produce, that provide the money, and that legally constrain the Executive Branch to pass along both without tampering with them. The relevant subcommittee chairmen in the Senate, Trent Lott (R., Miss.) and Ted Stevens (R., Alaska) are well disposed to missile defense. But neither they nor their staffs have stepped into the leadership vacuum created by the retirement of Malcolm Wallop. The real test of the Republicans' seriousness about missile defense—whether of Taipei, Tel Aviv, or Toledo, Ohio—will be whether they actually authorize the procurement of Upper Tier, SMTS, the SBL, and THAAD. Until they do, we had better get used to hoping that all attempts at foreign-policy blackmail by ballistic missile are bluffs. □

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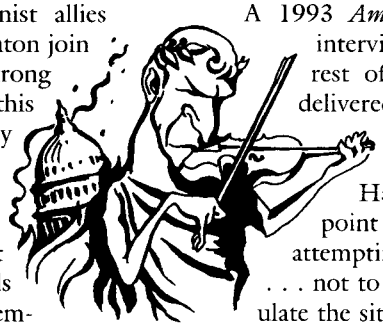
BREAD & CIRCUSES

AFTER a recent CNN *Crossfire* debate between the Feminist Majority's Eleanor Smeal and me, a conservative activist called to say that for the first time in a year he felt his team was playing offense. A visibly uncomfortable Mrs. Smeal had been forced to attempt to justify partial-birth abortions. She was trapped in the spotlight, alone in the crossfire.

But she and her feminist allies insisted that President Clinton join her there. And despite strong bipartisan opposition to this gruesome procedure, they succeeded. Mr. Clinton vetoed legislation that would have banned such abortions. Not for the first time, feminist demands have made a weak man tremble.



Some abortion-rights supporters cautioned the White House that "every time that picture [of the procedure] is shown you lose" and advised Mr. Clinton to compromise on the ban. But they were told that in an election year he couldn't risk alienating the feminist grassroots by permitting *any* abortion procedure to be outlawed. The White House nervously hoped that the personal testimonies of women who had undergone late-term abortions would trump medical diagrams and facts.

But the legislation Mr. Clinton vetoed enjoys the support of over 70 per cent of the public. Even among those who describe themselves as pro-choice, there is a two-thirds majority in favor of prohibition. Opposition to partial-birth abortions is therefore clearly the common ground that observers of the abortion battle have long urged both sides to find. House Minority Leader Dick Gephardt and 71 other House Democrats voted for the legislation. Gephardt's press secretary explains that her boss typically votes pro-choice, "but the sentiment in his district was overwhelmingly against this particular procedure."

That leaves extremists like Bill Clinton—and Dr. Martin Haskell, who claims credit for perfecting the partial-birth-abortion technique. The technique first came to light in 1989 in the *Dayton Daily News*. A college student who had witnessed Dr. Haskell perform abortions notified police that a child had been killed in the process of being delivered. Dr. Haskell assured the police that no crime had been committed because the infant's head was still inside the mother when it was killed.

A 1993 *American Medical News* interview asked why, if the rest of the baby could be delivered without risk to the mother, the baby's head couldn't. Dr. Haskell replied: "The point here is you're attempting to do an abortion . . . not to see how do I manipulate the situation so that I get a live birth instead."

Macabre facts like these proved a public-relations disaster for Haskell's defenders during debate on the ban. So they abandoned candor and asserted that the anesthesia given the mother kills the baby before the abortion. Alarmed that this nonsense might deter pregnant women from undergoing any operation that required anesthesia, the president of the American Society of Anesthesiologists testified that even when general anesthesia is administered to the mother only a portion of it reaches the baby; the local anesthesia used in this procedure doesn't reach the baby at all.

Ban opponents also argued that Congress should not intervene in doctors' clinical decisions. Yet the American Medical Association's Legislative Council unanimously recommended that the ban be endorsed, one council member explaining that this procedure is "basically repulsive" and "not a recognized medical technique."

The legislation compromised to the extent of allowing partial-birth abortions if necessary to save the life of the mother. That did not satisfy opponents such as NARAL. Mr. Clinton insisted that these opponents be accommodated by an amendment permitting such abortions if necessary to preserve the *health* of the mother. But as Douglas Johnson, legislative director of the National Right to Life Committee, points out, owing to the Court's decision in *Doe* v. *Bolton*, the term "health" is "a universal legal solvent, which dissolves any limitation on abortion."

Despite the feminists' disinformation campaign, the partial-birth-abortion debate may have turned the tide on the abortion issue. Michael Schwartz, executive director of the House Pro-Family Caucus, says: "This legislation focused public attention on the reality of abortion, and defenders of this gruesome procedure are quite properly feeling ashamed of themselves." The tide has left a big abortion problem on Democratic shores.

THE veto has split senior congressional Democrats from their abortion-rights allies. It has proved too much for the rank and file, too. José Kennard, a Texas Democratic Executive Committee member, has resigned, stating that he felt betrayed—"Unlike the debate over abortion that has been going on for decades, this procedure is clearly the taking of a human life." Many Hispanic Democrats are pro-life and will share Kennard's anger with Clinton's extremism.

The anguish of Kennard and others like him should give rise to a Democrats for Life group that would recognize that a pro-choice party can still protect the life of a child seconds from birth. The media would drop its obsession with GOP abortion squabbles if five thousand such Democrats rallied outside their party's convention in Chicago. All eight Catholic cardinals label the President's action as "beyond comprehension" and pledged to do everything in their power to see that the "shameful" veto is overridden.

But rather than defy the extreme feminists, President Clinton will defy 70 per cent of the American people and submit children to a procedure that he would prohibit National Institutes of Health scientists from performing on lab animals. It is four years since he claimed abortion should be "safe, legal, and rare"; yet now he refuses to ban a procedure that James Cardinal Hickey of Washington factually describes as "four-fifths infanticide, one-fifth abortion." If near-infanticide is to be allowed, how will abortion ever become rare?

—KATE O'BEIRNE

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ON THE SCENE

Castro's Endgame

MARTIN AROSTEGUI

Roberto Parada

MIAMI

THIRTY-five years ago, during the Bay of Pigs invasion, Colonel Alvaro Prendes flew one of the few Cuban warplanes to survive the CIA's bombardment of Castro's airfields. He shot down four American B-26 bombers piloted by Cuban exiles, helping turn the battle into one of America's worst Cold War fiascos.

Today, Prendes is himself an exile. Despite his high rank and all the privileges accorded him as a hero of the Revolution, he was so disgusted with Castro by 1992 that he risked everything. He gave a clandestine press conference calling for the maximum leader's removal.

"We managed to hold and transmit the press conference through dissident radio networks and 14 international news agencies," says Prendes. "It is one of the few occasions in which Castro was caught completely by surprise, and the degree of world attention we got saved my life."

Mr. Arostegui is the author of Twilight Warriors, *a book about special operations to be published in the U.S. by St. Martin's Press later this year.*

Prendes went through the usual ordeal of a Cuban dissident. His home was surrounded by shouting mobs of plain-clothes security men. His water and electricity were cut off. He was separated from his family. But Castro was afraid that another show trial, like the one in which Gen. Ochoa and 12 other dissident officers were convicted in 1989, could have dangerous repercussions within the military, and so he had no choice but to let Prendes leave.

Col. Prendes sits in a small office suite above a lamp shop in Miami's Little Havana. It is from there that he now directs the Unión de Soldados y Oficiales Libres (USOL), a growing movement against the Castro regime within the Cuban armed forces.

Two other officers sit with him. All three believe that circumstances could soon be ripe for a popular insurrection against Castro backed by sectors of the military. They maintain that a vast majority of Cuba's people are fed up with the regime, and that they are beginning to lose their fear of speaking. The officers also point to major international developments triggered by the shooting down in February of two unarmed Cessna planes belonging to a Cuban-American humanitarian group.

One of these developments was the passage on March 15 of the Helms–Burton bill tightening the U.S. trade embargo. By choking off foreign investment in Cuban state-run firms, the tightened embargo could undermine the system of institutionalized corruption which Castro is trying to foster among his generals and intelligence chiefs to keep them sleek and happy.

In a parallel development, an important friend of Castro's in Spain, Socialist Prime Minister Felipe Gonzales, lost his bid for re-election. Spain's new conservative prime minister, José María Aznar, is promising to cool off relations with Castro and to help the domestic and exiled opposition.

In the vain hope that Castro was going to liberalize, the Clinton Administration and various European governments were trying to cozy up to him. But it is hardly surprising to those who know his regime that Castro, rather than reaching out to his growing opposition, has chosen to retrench among the thugs and sycophants who make up his inner circle.

Media attention has focused on the shootdown of the two planes operating for the Miami-based group Brothers to the Rescue. But coverage of the incident has tended to ignore its place in the context of Castro's wider crackdown on internal dissidence. Just days prior to the attack by the Cuban MiGs, 250 activists of the pro-democracy movement Concilio Cubano were rounded up as they held a meeting in Havana.

Brothers to the Rescue was deeply involved in supporting Concilio. Its leader, Basulto, another veteran of the Bay of Pigs, had raised money for domestic dissidents in Cuba and, on more than one occasion, had managed to evade Castro's radar defenses to spread leaflets containing highly subversive written material—The Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Putting an end to these flights was becoming an obsession for Castro. In January, he had asked a visiting delegation of retired U.S. military officers what Washington would do if he destroyed the next plane to enter Cuban airspace. One admiral told him that it would be a public-relations fiasco. Castro decided to take a gamble anyway, but not without contriving a disinformation cover to try to turn it into a propaganda victory.

IT IS Col. Prendes's theory, which circumstances appear to corroborate, that double agent Juan Roque of the DGI (Cuba's equivalent of the KGB) was going to be planted in prison as a surviving pilot carrying evidence that Brothers to the Rescue were conducting assassinations and other terrorist acts. The day before the group's three aircraft took off on their ambushed mission, Roque had flown to the Bahamas. After trying to instigate a riot at a Cuban refugee camp supplied by the Miami group, he liaised with a "visiting delegation" of Cuban officials, who scurried him off to Havana.

Initial CNN broadcasts about the attack, on the evening of Saturday, Febru-

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ary 24, referred to reports about a "survivor in the water." As late as Sunday evening, news desks in Europe were still trying to follow up the story, which had come from an official source in Havana, and on Monday a CNN commentator was still talking about sources in Havana who had "documentary proof that the pirates of Brothers to the Rescue were carrying explosives for terrorist attacks against Cuba." Cuban officials also claimed to have hard evidence that the planes were flying within Cuban airspace at the moment of the attack.

THE scheme of planting the evidence with Roque masquerading as a shot-down pilot fell apart because the intercepting Cuban MiGs failed to hit all three aircraft. By diving below radar cover and over a nearby cruise ship, Basulto managed to evade the MiGs, making it back to Miami to give the real version of what happened.

There were even mysterious backups inside the United States for Castro's disinformation scheme. According to Arnaldo Iglesias, Basulto's co-pilot, an individual posing as a U.S. Customs agent immediately came to their aircraft hangar as they landed at Opa-Locka, insisting that they hand over the tapes of their conversations with Cuban air-controllers. According to the supposed Customs official, the tapes were not to be made public and had to be taken for safekeeping. Basulto refused. After his press conference, at which he played the vital tapes, which ultimately proved that the planes were outside Cuban airspace when they were attacked, nothing more was heard from the putative official. The U.S. Customs Service denies having ever ordered any of its agents to acquire the tapes.

Alvaro Prendes points to some telling differences between the way Castro is dealing with this crisis and the way he has dealt with previous ones. "First of all, unlike past confrontations with the U.S., there is no mass rally in Havana to demonstrate 'revolutionary solidarity and defiance.' Castro may no longer be sure that he can control a large public gathering. Secondly, he has taken personal responsibility, choosing not to make scapegoats of the pilots as might have been done in the past. He knows perfectly well that the military's rank and file simply would not stand for it. His situation is shaky."

The USOL officers showed me a report written in longhand by sources inside Cuba, giving an account of efforts to organize a military uprising in May 1994 in the province of Guantánamo. The abortive attempt had the support of some sixty officers controlling an infantry regiment, according to the report, which gives the exact towns and even highway locations of barracks and military depots that were going to be seized.

But word was leaked as the last preparations were getting under way. Twenty-four hours before the planned coup, its main leaders were rounded up in midnight arrests by special troops of the Interior Ministry. A total of nine officers—including the conspiracy's alleged head, an army captain by the name of Martinez—have been jailed without any formal charges or public courts-martial.

"Castro's control over information and the media in Cuba has to be broken for any internal opposition to gain momentum," observed Prendes. He describes Radio Martí, a broadcasting service backed by the U.S. Government, as "highly effective. If TV Martí's images could penetrate Cuban airwaves with equal effect, it would be all over for Castro in a matter of months."

Castro is so scared of TV Martí that in 1989 he worked on a terrorist plan to blow up its transmission towers in southern Florida. He now spends $12 million a year jamming its broadcasts.

President Clinton's responses to the February shootdown have included an order to increase the transmission power of Radio Martí. No new measures, however, have been taken to strengthen TV Martí. Apparently, the White House and the cautious State and Defense Department bureaucracies have shied away from such steps for fear of the confrontation that could result. Castro might retaliate by unleashing another flood of refugees and/or by ordering terrorist attacks against the United States. America would then have to respond with a full naval blockade, or even with direct military action.

Castro's army has glaring weaknesses. Of any regular 10,000-man division, only a few hundred men are permanently inside their barracks; the vast majority live dispersed with their families and friends among the general population. Calling them up would take weeks—and in the event of anti-regime disturbances, soldiers who have been suffering the same degree of deprivations as everyone else could easily go the other way.

The regime, however, does have highly indoctrinated elite shock troops controlled by the Interior Ministry on permanent standby to deal with internal unrest. These include an airborne unit known as the Red Berets, based mainly in rural areas, and the Black Hornets, trained in urban combat and mainly concentrated in Havana.

Prendes, impressed with the high-precision bombing displayed in the Gulf War, says: "If at a given moment in which internal circumstances warranted, surgical precision bombing conducted by missiles and aircraft targeted certain key ministries, communications centers, official residences, and arms depots, the regime would collapse in 24 hours. Castro would have no effective defense against the type of sophisticated weaponry which the United States can field. His fleet of MiGs, of which less than two squadrons are fully operational, could be wiped out with just one well-directed wave of airstrikes."

The role USOL officers see for their movement following the regime's collapse is to provide a network that can maintain some cohesion in the army to contain the inevitable disorders. "Even if Castro were to accept the hopelessness of his situation and leave Cuba in the hands of some provisional government, you have to bear in mind that there will be hundreds of thousands of personal scores to settle among the population. We can only aim to control the situation sufficiently so that it does not overly interfere with the development of democracy."

THIRTY-FIVE years ago, Col. Prendes could take to the sky in his T-33 trainer because the second wave of airstrikes, with which the CIA had planned to finish off what remained of Castro's air force, was canceled at the last moment by President Kennedy. The President was afraid of provoking the Soviet Union, and we've been saddled with Castro ever since.

This year, as in all presidential elections since Kennedy's, the candidates will be coming to Miami to court the Cuban-American vote. Bob Dole was there in March, laying a wreath at the Bay of Pigs memorial. He promised to push for the extradition of criminals involved in Castro's most recent brutalities. But measures which transcend gestures and economic embargoes may be needed to bring about the end of the regime. And the Soviet Union is no longer around to provide an excuse. □

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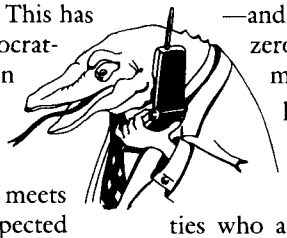
GEKKO

IN ONE of those bursts of effort that falling-down drunks can come up with, the economy showed a little more strength in the first quarter than people like me expected. This has provoked hope (among Democratic officeholders) and fear (in the bond market).



But there is less to the notion of an economy in "sustainable growth" than meets the eye. The higher-than-expected consumer spending that has got the credit markets spooked was driven by a couple of special circumstances. First, the erratic schedule of income-tax refunds, which pretty much go to people who need to spend them immediately, favored February and March. Weekly refund payments in those months were running 25 to 45 per cent above the levels of a year ago. That helped. But the Clinton tax increases on higher-income people will hit in mid April, and by May retailers will be looking elsewhere for cash for the register.

Retailers have also been depending on consumers' willingness and ability to borrow. And once again, the beginning of the year showed double-digit increases in consumer installment debt over levels of a year ago. But the consumer, especially the middle-income consumer, can't keep adding debt at an annual rate of more than 14 per cent when hourly earnings are going up at a 3 per cent rate. Before there's any strong revival in buying power, some of this debt has to be paid down. And remember that this debt carries a variable rate that has been rising since the beginning of the year.

The consumer will also be paying more for energy and food, which has the same effect as a tax increase. And while inventories of grain, oil, and oil products are low, which is driving the first phase of the coming commodity inflation, inventories of manufactured goods—such as personal computers, semiconductors, steel, and paper—are up. Those will have to be worked off before demand can revive.

And the growth rates of capital spending, which has been heavily weighted to computers, are dropping from double digits down toward —and in some cases below— zero. Exports to our still-anemic rich-country trading partners are slowing down.

This won't go on forever, of course. Politicians and the monetary authorities who are employed by politicians will go for the fool's gold of monetary inflation. Before then, though, there will be a very disappointing economy. Republicans ought to be positioning themselves as the pro-growth cutters of taxes and spending. You can see the tax-aggravated slowdown coming. Why not sound the warning?

■ If a paradise on earth could be created by philosopher-planners, then France would be the beacon of enlightenment. I just spent a few days in Paris, and I have to say that if you've made your money elsewhere, that is a great city in which to spend it.

And for the moment, the bond markets are saying that France is an only infinitesimally worse credit risk than Germany—yields on French bonds are within 10 basis points (one-tenth of 1 per cent) of yields on German bonds. If you believe the swap market—and I don't—French interest rates will decline below German rates within three years.

Do you remember, in the stage version of *Peter Pan*, when all the children in the audience have to clap to keep Tinkerbell alive? Well, think of European Monetary Union as Tinkerbell and European bureaucrats and their allies in the bond markets as the children. True, *Peter Pan* was fiction—but so is EMU. The idea is that by tying fiscal and monetary policy to Germany, the French government elite will impose Teutonic order and discipline on the French workforce and public.

Maybe. Well, no.

Unemployment is over 11 per cent officially, and God knows what percentage in reality. If you are a senior civil servant spending your expense-account francs during a monetary conference in Germany, Spain, or Italy, everything looks pretty good. On paper, your state budget is moving toward "convergence" with that of Germany, and even the pesky English Conservatives look as if they'll be tossed out.

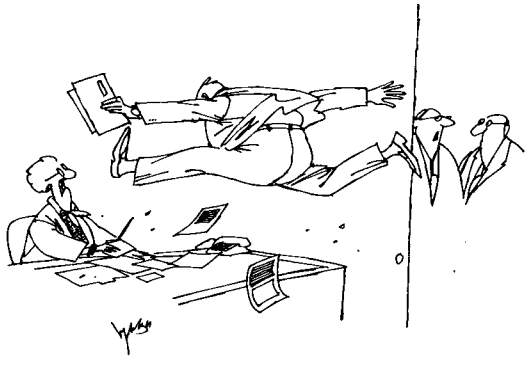
But that civil servant is kidding himself. However much the tax collectors lay on their whips, it's going to be hard to balance the budget with more taxation. As for cutting spending—the government is forgetting that its Faustian bargain with the voting and working (or striking) public requires it to provide something for nothing. Social spending and government jobs must be preserved, taxes can't increase, and the currency must remain strong. Oh, and inflation and interest rates can't go up. This will all be made possible by the best government planners in the world.

I listen to expat Americans who have been hired to lecture on venture capital in the state's elite schools. They have the frustrated aspect that you can imagine besetting the first Jesuit missionaries among the Indians of Paraguay.

Sell French bonds against their German counterparts. The Germans aren't happy either, but they're not as deeply into self-deception.

■ If you care at all about Asian finance, you should pick up *Grant's Asia Observer*. Jim Grant's skeptical analysis of credit-market excesses has been invaluable since he started *Grant's Interest-Rate Observer* in the early Eighties. He and Jeff Uscher, who worked for years in the Japanese markets, have shown in the first two issues of the *Asia Observer* that they're keeping up to the standards set by the domestic edition.

—JOHN DIZARD



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Beyond The Death of God

The atheistic assumptions of modern society are being challenged by the new science—which is making many scientists distinctly uneasy.

PATRICK GLYNN

WHILE our attention has been riveted on the momentous political and ideological realignments that mark the century's end, we have all but overlooked a quiet revolution in scientific understanding with far more radical implications for the modern world view. At issue here is the central premise of the great atheistic modern creeds, whether one speaks of Communism, Fascism, Existentialism, Positivism, or even Freudianism. All these doctrines took as their point of departure the so-called "death of God." More particularly, all rested fundamentally on the conviction—once thought to be scientifically demonstrated—that human life arose in the universe as a chance event. Whatever their important divergences from one another, all were essentially responses to, or elaborations of, the central modern idea of the "random universe." The overthrow of the "random universe" by contemporary science is the great unnoticed revolution of late-twentieth-century thought.

The revolution in our vision of the cosmos effected by physics and scientific cosmology over the past quarter-century has been profound—as far-reaching in its implications for philosophy and human understanding as the Copernican and Darwinian revolutions before it. The remarkable thing is that it has gone largely unheralded. At the philosophical crux of this revolution is a conception known as "the Anthropic Principle"—from the Greek *anthropos*, "man." The Anthropic Principle rests on a series of technical observations about the evolution of the universe since the Big Bang. But its upshot is that, far from being an "accident," the existence of human life is something for which the entire universe appears to have been intricately fine-tuned from the start.

The principle was first promulgated by cosmologist Brandon Carter in a now-famous lecture to the International Astronomic Union in 1974. Carter pointed to what he called a number of astonishing "coincidences" among the universal constants—values such as Planck's constant, h, or the gravitational constant, G. It turns out that infinitesimal changes in the values of any of these constants would have resulted in a universe profoundly different from our own, and radically inhospitable to life.

Since Carter first gave a name to this class of observations, the list of such "coincidences" or "lucky accidents" has vastly expanded. The relative masses of subatomic particles, the precise rate of expansion of the universe in the tiny fractions of a second after the Big Bang, the precise strengths of the nuclear weak force, the nuclear strong force, and electromagnetism—scientists now understand that minuscule alterations (often as little as one part per million) in these values and relationships, or in scores of others, would have caused catastrophic derailments in the series of events following the universe's beginning. Depending on how one tinkered with these values, one could have emerged with a starless universe or no "universe" at all. And even the slightest tinkering with a single one of these values, most scientists now agree, would have foreclosed the possibility of life.

The philosophical implications of these seemingly highly technical observations are far more radical than most adherents of the modern philosophical vision, many scien-

Mr. Glynn, a Resident Scholar at the American Enterprise Institute, is writing a book on late-twentieth-century science, religion, and philosophy.

ILLUSTRATION BY BONNIE T. GARDNER

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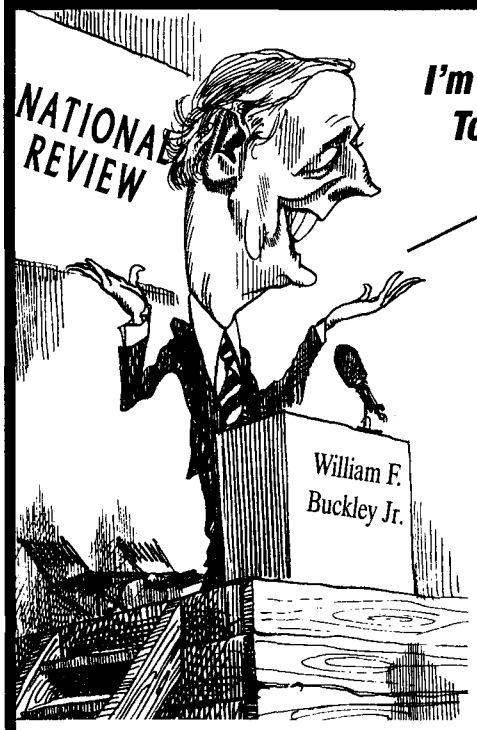

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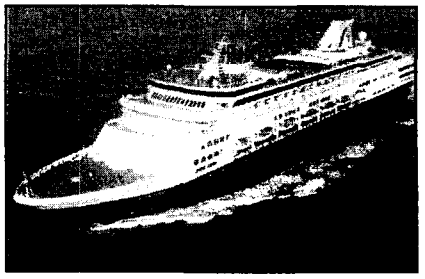

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tists included, have yet been prepared to admit. For if it is valid, the Anthropic Principle overturns the central cosmological assumption—the assumption of the random universe—on which the modern atheistic philosophies were based.

TO appreciate the shift in scientific understanding, one need go back no further than Bertrand Russell's classic 1935 volume, *Religion and Science*, a concise rendition of the then-mainstream modernist vision of the cosmos. In that book, Russell set out to demonstrate how science had successively refuted all the main tenets of religion. The crux of his argument was cosmological.

The modern scientific understanding of the universe, Russell explained, was the product of two major scientific revolutions: the Copernican and the Darwinian. With the sun-centered model of the solar system, Copernicus showed that humanity was not in any sense, as the Bible taught, at the "center" of the universe. Centuries later, Darwin demonstrated that it was no longer necessary to posit an act of divine creation to explain even the origins of human life; rather, the existence of all life, including human life, could be explained entirely by chance mechanisms. Science, Russell explained, had rigorously shown life to be the product not of design, but of pure contingency. In the light of these discoveries, he suggested, it was no longer reasonable to regard humanity as central to the universe or as the creature of some Creator-God. Rather, humanity had become "intelligible," as he put it, only as a "curious accident in a backwater."

"A curious accident in a backwater"—one would be hard put to find a more succinct encapsulation of the dominant modernist understanding of the human condition, the ice-cold core and angst-ridden leitmotif of the atheistic modernist vision. A host of major late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century thinkers and writers measured their own intellectual honesty and courage by their willingness to stare unflinchingly into this particular metaphysical abyss. Marx, Nietzsche, Heidegger, the early T. S. Eliot, Sartre, Camus, even cool-headed positivists such as A. J. Ayer—all the great shapers of the modernist sensibility—took the random, godless universe as their starting point, their master premise. Sigmund Freud, another famous atheist, spoke glowingly of the two "revolutions" in terms almost identical to Russell's—grandly nominating his own discovery of the "unconscious" as yet a third "revolution," completing the radical dethronement of both God and man. And it was almost certainly Darwin's seeming confirmation of the universe as pure contingency that gave Friedrich Nietzsche the confidence in 1885 to proclaim categorically what so many of his intellectual contemporaries were already saying aloud in other words: "God is dead."

Darwin's vision of life and the human species as the product of pure contingency was not by any means the only source of modern atheism—which had been gaining ground in Western philosophy, under the inspiration of the scientific vision, at least since the Enlightenment. But it was Darwin's seemingly unimpeachable discoveries that, in many minds, closed the question, that gave the modern death-of-God vision its unassailable authority.

When we understand how important the myth of the "two revolutions" was to shaping the modern picture of the universe—and the theology that followed from it—we can begin to grasp the radical implications of Carter's observation. Carter himself proposed the Anthropic Principle as merely a limit to the Copernican Principle, since, as he put it, "our location in the Universe is necessarily privileged to the extent of being compatible with our existence as observers." In reality, that understated the case. In effect, the Anthropic Principle reversed the longstanding interpretation of the two revolutions, since it suggested that, far from being some curious sideshow or accident, humanity, or life at least, appeared to be the goal toward which the entire universe had been intricately orchestrated, the logical center around which a host of physical values and relations had been exquisitely and precisely arranged.

I say "appeared to be" advisedly. It would obviously be rash, and logically unjustifiable, to argue that the Anthropic Principle somehow constituted a proof of the existence of God. Indeed, one can contentedly accept Immanuel Kant's longstanding philosophical verdict to the effect that questions such as the existence of God are beyond the reach of science or reason. But scientific investigation of nature has always prompted a surmise about what might lie beyond or above it. Such surmises have powerfully shaped human thought and action, fostering whole philosophical movements, indeed at times influencing the life of whole nations. Darwin's theory powerfully inspired one kind of surmise, the surmise of atheism and the random universe; modern cosmology and the Anthropic Principle would appear to prompt a very different one. The least we can say is that the modernist surmise of atheism—which quickly became the modernist conclusion and the modernist dogma, the basis for a host of twentieth-century creeds from Communism to Existentialism to Logical Positivism—was unwarranted and premature.

SCIENTISTS have hardly been oblivious to these issues, of course, and some have approached them with an open mind. Of special note have been the writings of the British-born physicist Paul Davies, who has laid out the larger questions raised by the Anthropic Principle in a series of books, without attempting to draw firm conclusions (and who was rewarded with the prestigious Templeton Prize for Progress in Religion in 1995). Tulane University physicist Frank J. Tipler, together with astrophysicist and cosmologist John D. Barrow, produced a massive volume on the Anthropic Principle, meditating at length on its scientific, philosophical, and theological implications. Since then, in a 1994 book called *The Physics of Immortality*, Tipler has tried to effect his own new synthesis—offering a scientific "proof" of God, complete with complex equations. Most readers tend to agree that Tipler's effort crashes on the shoals of philosophical incoherence (he argues, for example, there is no ontological distinction between an automobile and human being—both are simply "machines"), but his attempt merits admiration as an honest effort to take the stunning implications of the Anthropic Revolution seriously. Finally, a number of astute theologians, including such prominent figures as Ted

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Peters, Arthur Peacocke, and John Polkinghorne (the latter two fully credentialed as natural scientists), have drawn the obvious inferences from Carter's observation, showing how it decisively strengthens the traditional "argument from design" for the existence of God.

But the response of the mainstream scientific and philosophical communities to the challenge posed by the Anthropic Revolution has been oddly grudging and sophistical—indeed, something of an intellectual scandal. Time and again scientists have sought to explain away this new understanding of the universe, sometimes with the most contorted and preposterous arguments, while the atheistic professional philosophers of contemporary academe—

The a priori *commitment to atheism has proved so powerful that many scientists are scurrying to find arguments to explain away the massive evidence that threatens it.*

somehow oblivious to the fact that the metaphysical foundation of their doctrines has been challenged, if not shattered—have almost universally ignored it.

If Bertrand Russell was free to draw such sweeping cosmological and theological conclusions from Darwin and Copernicus, with the general blessing of the Western scientific elite, how is it that Carter's radical conceptual challenge to these conclusions—based, unlike Russell's free-form speculations, on a detailed scientific account of the universe's evolution—has been so widely disparaged? After indoctrinating generations of students into the myth of the two revolutions (who among us was not exposed to this hackneyed version of modern scientific history in our secondary and college educations?), the scientific community as a whole might be expected to pause and carefully assess whether Carter's simple observation had not exploded the whole concept. But the *a priori* commitment to the atheist notion of the random universe has proved so powerful in our time as to send many scientists scurrying to find logical, and sometimes illogical, arguments to explain away the massive evidence that threatens to refute it.

The first line of defense has been logical hair-splitting. The Anthropic Principle has been said to be a tautology, since we could not expect to observe a universe that was not capable of producing us. This is the purest sophistry, since it pretends to ignore the surprise we register at stumbling upon such a multitude of coincidences. It evades the question rather than attempting to answer it. It is as if to say, We would not be observing the elephant we see standing in our living room if the elephant had not gotten there in the first place. True, but nonsense. This essentially tautological formulation sometimes has been called the "weak Anthropic Principle." It is "weak" in more ways than one.

Coincidences do not prove, but they suggest, sometimes powerfully. Indeed, our ability to detect and infer from coincidences plays a critical role in our basic capacity to interpret and find our way in the world around us. Without such ability, life would be for us a tale told by an idiot. If a detective investigating a crime, for example, stumbles on a series of mysterious coincidences, he will look for a human hand behind them. The hand may not be there, or may not be found. But the presumption will favor the existence of such human intervention, and a good detective will follow the trail of evidence until the supposition is disproved or proved. He will not take refuge in platitudes to the effect that "coincidences are a part of life."

The second line of defense has been a resort to imagination or fantasy. Our universe has been said to be simply one of billions of universes existing either in sequence or in parallel—none of which, of course, save our own, we can detect. Given the supposed existence of these billions of universes, the fact that one (ours) happened to hit on the precise combination of values and relationships to produce life would not be surprising. This is actually a very old, pre-scientific argument, a traditional mainstay of the atheist case—invoked by Diderot and Hume and dating back to the Epicureans of Roman times—that, given an infinite duration, nature, acting randomly, would eventually assemble the order we see around us. A monkey at a word processor, over infinity, would eventually type the works of Shakespeare, or so it is supposed.

Each of these proposals is a grand balloon of speculation anchored to a tiny grain of scientific hypothesis. To be sure, scientists are not yet certain whether the present universe is a one-time event or whether, at a certain point, it collapses back in on itself, only to begin the cycle of expansion anew. That there is an oscillating sequence of universes remains at least theoretically possible, though the present evidence suggests otherwise. The somewhat different "parallel universes" idea rests on a highly theoretical proposal advanced by Hugh Everett in 1957 to solve the "problem of measurement" in quantum mechanics. Everett proposed that all the possibilities implicit in matter before it is actually observed—before, for example, light in its fuzzy "wave" state is observed and collapses into a photon particle—actually exist in reality. Everett imagined that, at each observation, reality was infinitely branching out. My eye would observe one photon with certain properties in this universe, while, in effect, copies of "me" would be observing photons with the other possible properties in a series of parallel universes *ad infinitum*. It is a powerful speculation, and a theoretically interesting way of posing the genuine paradoxes implicit in the quantum theory—but it is just that, a speculation. There appears to be no way

"I don't mind life being a game, but I hate having to bribe the referees all the time."

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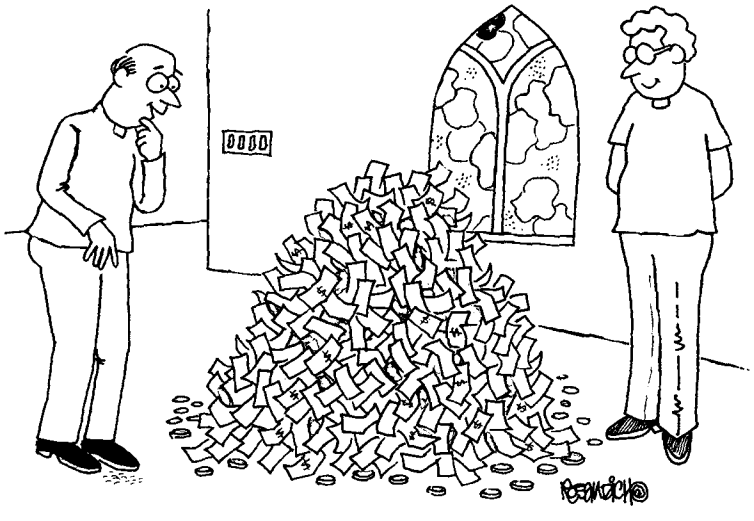
that such parallel universes could be detected, even in theory; certainly, no one has stumbled on them so far.

Davies writes that "many" scientists find the "parallel universes" idea "a preferable hypothesis to the belief in a supernatural design." But it is no more than a preference, and a very odd one, given what scientists so often preach in advertisement of their own profession. Praising science at the expense of religion in 1935, Russell boasted: "The scientific temper of mind is cautious, tentative, and piecemeal." "The way in which science arrives at its beliefs is quite different," he wrote, "from that of medieval theology. . . . Science starts, not from large assumptions, but from particular facts discovered by observation or experiment." That so many members of a profession which prides itself above all on the dictum, "Just the facts, ma'am," would show a "preference" for wild speculations about unseen universes for which not a shred of observational evidence exists suggests something about both the power of the modern atheistic ideology and the cultural agenda of many in the scientific profession. By embracing the "parallel universes" as a last bulwark against the all-too-threatening suggestion of "supernatural design," the mainstream scientific community has in effect shown its attachment to the atheistic ideology of the random universe to be in some respects more powerful than its commitment to the scientific method itself. The modern scientific mind—which contentedly believed it had refuted the religious world view on the basis of pure observation and fact—has been scandalously unwilling to admit that the facts on which it based its presumptive conclusions were not, in reality, what they appeared to be.

The final line of defense against the Anthropic Revolution has been a kind of scientific legalism. The Anthropic Principle is said to fail the test of falsifiability (a contention which, in fact, remains in technical dispute). Since, it is argued, no observation or set of observations could prove or disprove the Anthropic Principle as a *theory,* it is not properly "scientific." On such grounds, Heinz R. Pagels, executive director of the New York Academy of Sciences, in 1987 urged dismissal of the Anthropic Principle as "needless clutter in the conceptual repertoire of science." But this is the moral equivalent of the courts' exclusionary rule—throwing out the entire murder case on the basis of a minor legal technicality. Whether the Anthropic Principle meets the technical qualifications of a formal scientific theory is irrelevant to what it suggests about the fundamental nature of the universe. Scientists may not "need" the Anthropic Principle as a theory for narrow purposes of scientific investigation (though in fact it has spurred a host of interesting discoveries); but the moment they begin to speculate—as they so often freely do—about what scientific discovery tells us about the nature of the universe at large, this elephant in the living room can hardly be overlooked. The double standard at work here is breathtaking: a host of scientists, from Russell to Richard Dawkins to Carl Sagan, are free to use loose surmises based on Darwin's theory to buttress the public case for atheism; but the moment scientists begin marshalling rather considerable and persuasive evidence for the opposite case, their speculation risks being branded by colleagues as "unscientific."

THE Anthropic Principle does not settle the question; it is not a proof of God. But it alters the presumption; it shifts the *burden* of proof. One cannot help wondering, if the nineteenth century's understanding of the universe had been as broad and deep as our own, whether the long and miserable "death-of-God" phase of Western history would have taken shape at all. Had Carter been around to offer his observations, say, a year or two after Darwin's *The Origin of Species*, would Western minds have so readily accepted Darwin's picture of a universe based on pure contingency as the final word? Would the notion of the cosmos as a blind, impersonal mechanism, throwing up human existence as a bad joke or "a curious accident in a backwater," have achieved its stranglehold on the modern philosophical, political, and literary imagination? Would we have had to endure the special horrors perpetrated on humanity by unprecedentedly ruthless political ideologies—e.g., Communism, Nazism, Fascism—that are centrally founded on the philosophical idea of the "death of God"?

Even if one took the Anthropic Principle as definitive proof of the "argument by design" for God's existence, it would not exhaust the "God question." To argue that there is a guiding intelligence behind, above, or within the universe is not the same as arguing for a benign, personal Deity. To echo Pascal, the God of the Anthropic Principle is not yet the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. There remain other thorny questions, perhaps most obviously the problem of evil, for theologians and philosophers to sort out. But had the Anthropic Principle been part of the nineteenth-century scientific and philosophical world view, the starting-point of twentieth-century philosophical debate might have been very different. It should certainly be different today. □



"Well, I'd say the collection plate 'amnesty' idea turned out rather well."

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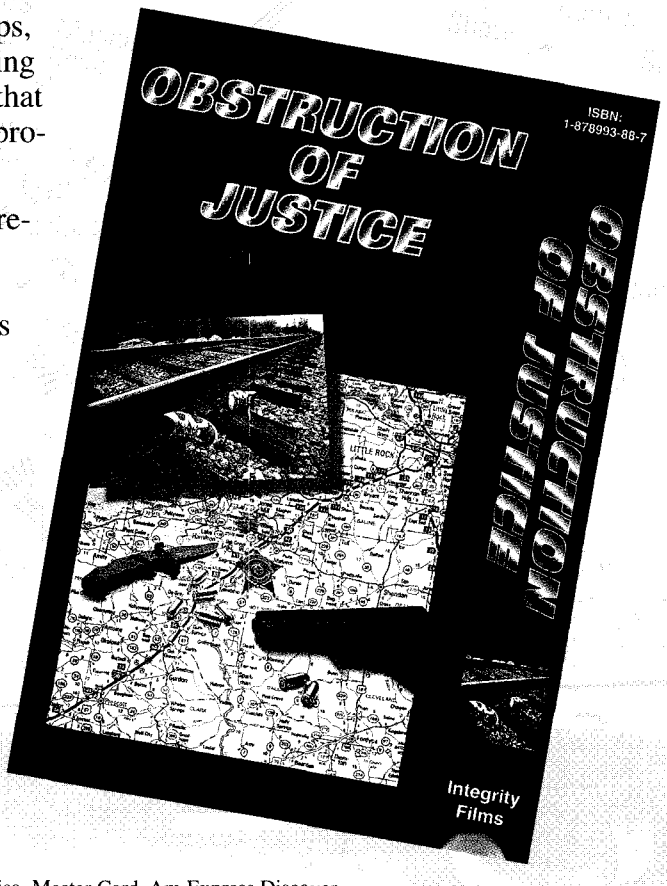

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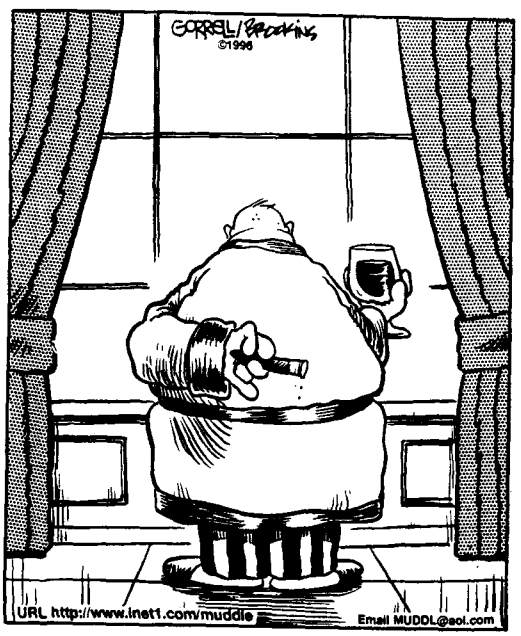
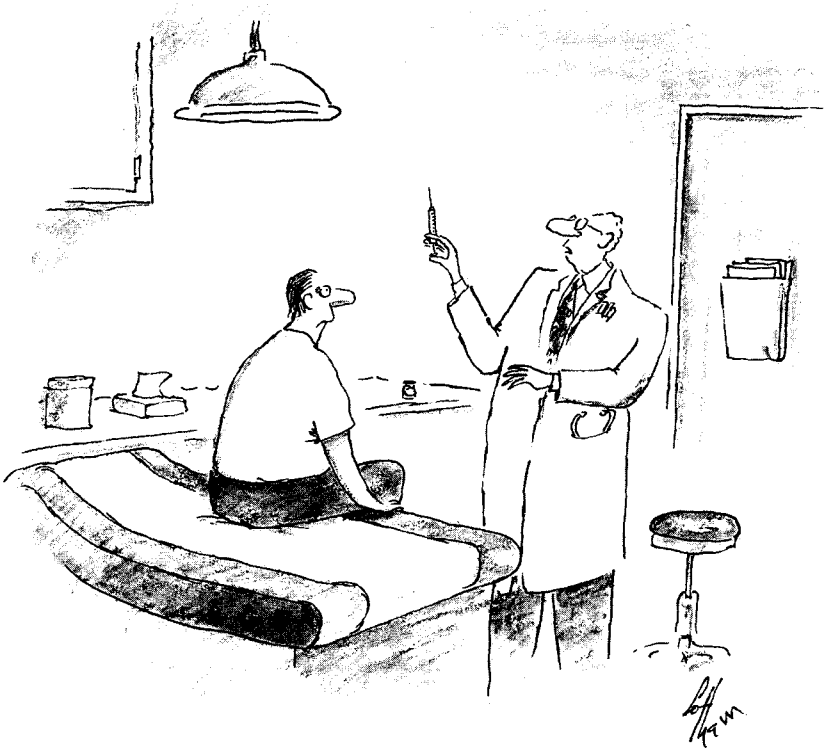


"Life had been good. Through the years, all those weekly donations from strangers had made a wealthy man of Mr. Fica."

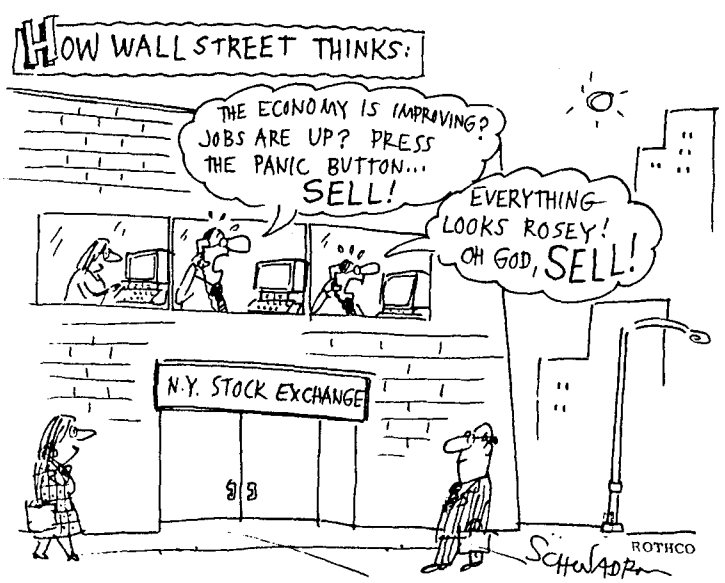


"I'm retiring at the end of next month, so I've decided to kill off all my old patients."

Now, Voyager

As approval for Hillary droops
While the draperies quiver with snoops,
One can understand why
She was dying to fly
Where the troops alley-oop through her hoops.

—W. H. von Dreele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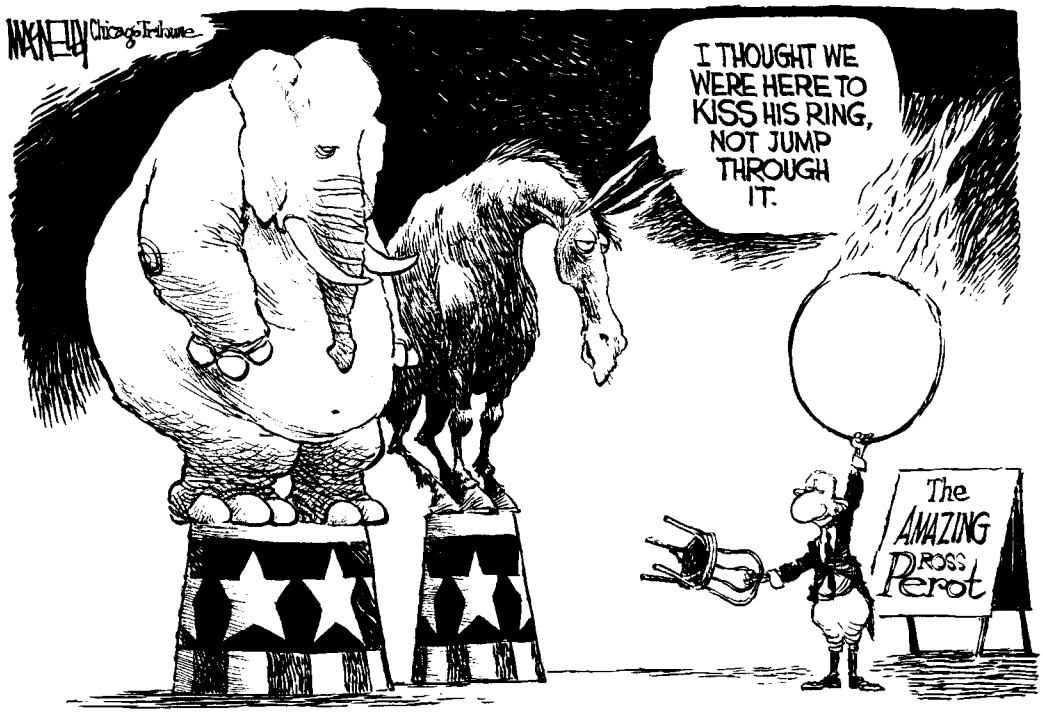

REMEMBER WHEN WE USED TO BE TERRORIZED BY FIRE-BREATHING DRAGONS?
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BREAKING THE 11TH COMMANDMENT

Reagan's Spoiled Children

Malaise and infighting are threatening the future of the conservative movement.

RAMESH PONNURU

THIS has been a winter of discontent for conservatives, during which the high spirits of 1995 became a frustrating memory. Budget defeats and infighting in the primaries have left conservatives still more demoralized. Republicans in Congress fear taking on powerful but controversial issues such as official English and affirmative action. They ascribe mythic powers to Bill Clinton and Dick Morris and assume the Administration would win the public-relations battles that would ensue. And in some cases their defeatism extends to predictions that the GOP will lose its majority in the Congress.

At the grassroots, the Left is more energized than the Right as we move toward the election. "You can practically feel the malaise," says Amy Moritz, head of the National Center for Public Policy Research.

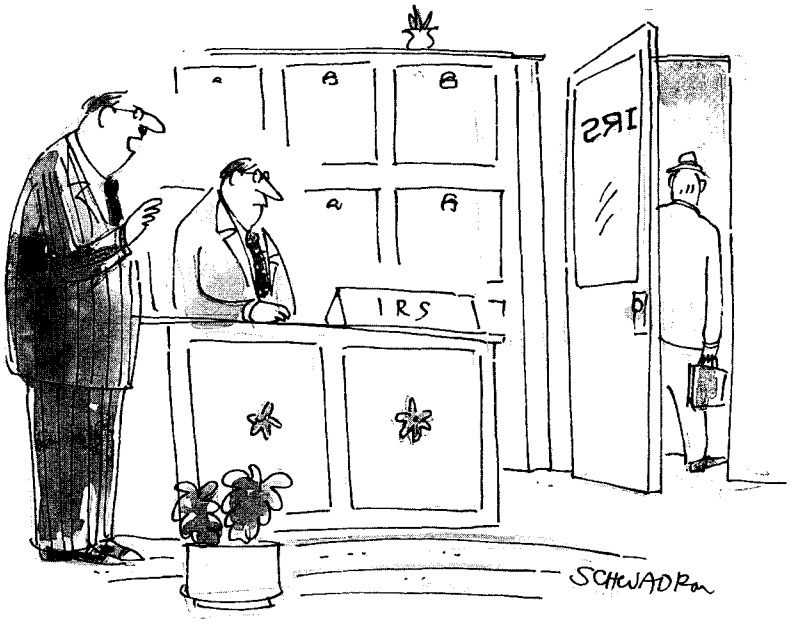
This mood is in part a byproduct of the political season, the dog-days between the primaries and the general-election campaign. Grover Norquist, the jovial strategist, argues that ever since "the adrenaline rush in the first hundred days," conservatives have been marking time. Instead of grousing, he says, they should use the lull to build up their grassroots organizations.

Then, too, Beltway conservatives are still adjusting to majority status. Unrealistic expectations of a "revolution" after the 1994 elections set them up for disillusionment. A thin majority in the House and merely nominal control of the Senate ought to have led them to build the case for expanding their majorities by giving the American people a preview of the tangible benefits they could expect from conservative governance. Instead they tried to govern immediately, believing that their triumph was historically inevitable and permanent. When Clinton declined to roll over as expected, says Michael Horowitz of the Hudson Institute, "Many conservatives, particularly the younger ones, discovered to their shock that the other side can shoot real bullets." As a result, Congress has so far delivered for only one group: speed demons made happy by the repeal of the federal speed limit.

And those early defeats have made Beltway conservatives gun-shy. Where they once had over-ambitious goals, they are now nervous of having any goals at all. Their inability to devise a sequel to the Contract with America that would command broad support from lawmakers is an ominous indicator of the present mood. "If you don't have a goal, you won't have morale," says Miss Moritz. "And we haven't had a goal other than taking Newt's orders for 15 months."

But if specific mistakes and the constraint of having President Clinton in the White House were wholly responsible for the current malaise, conservatives could be optimistic. As it is, they have a deeper anxiety: is their coalition cracking up, its internal disagreements no longer submerged by a common desire to topple the mighty empire of Liberaldom? Even on an issue as central as taxes, conservatives have not reached a consensus. After two years of debate, supply-siders still see the tax credit for children as a sop to the Christian Coalition, and social conservatives still see the capital-gains tax cut as a sop to Wall Street. In this and other debates, different sorts of conservatives are too often walled up in their respective ghettoes.

When they're not hurling incendiary charges at each other. Charges of racism and nativism, for instance, have been bandied about freely, and other charges typically used by liberals to smear conservatives en masse have been brought into intra-family debates. Such conduct



"Remember now, Hagedorn, you no longer work for the private sector. In the public sector, the customer is never *right."*

Mr. Ponnuru is NR*'s national reporter.*

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has provided grist for liberals' mills and eroded the collegiality that used to exist on the Right.

And as conservatives fought these Beltway battles, they were losing touch with the concerns of conservative voters in the boondocks. The two candidates who won the most votes, Dole and Pat Buchanan, were the very ones most disliked by the conservative intelligentsia. Conservatives were, at best, irrelevant to the presidential race. Yet they have been remarkably disinclined to reflect on their role in the debacle.

FOR debacle it was—and, moreover, an unnecessary one. In 1988, the three conservative candidates won about a third of the primary votes; this time around, economic and social conservatives combined were pulling much closer to 50 per cent. The conditions were there for a united conservative coalition to win the nomination and the election. While it's too early to know how a Dole Administration would turn out, it's not too early for recriminations.

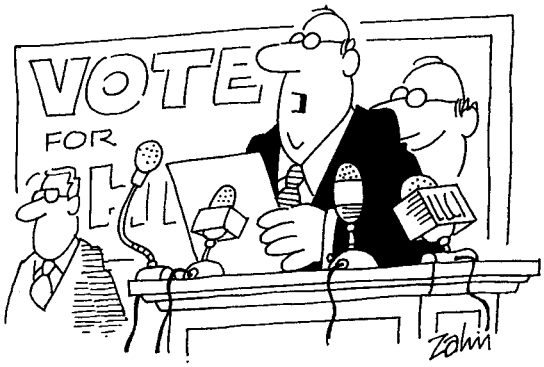
On paper the choice was an easy one: either make a conservative case for the front-runner, or coalesce around a candidate capable of stopping him. A thin slice of the conservative intelligentsia settled for Bob Dole early. The rest played with weak candidates or non-candidates. A number of prominent conservatives, many of them clustered around *The Weekly Standard*, flirted with Colin Powell and Newt Gingrich—helping Dole freeze out his actual competition for crucial months. (By the time they moved to the Lamar Alexander camp, their influence in these matters had worn thin.) Other conservative notables such as Norquist and Paul Weyrich adopted an airy nonchalance about the outcome; some even suggested that it might not matter if Republicans won the White House so long as they held Congress.

And in the absence of a unifying candidate, the Reagan coalition split, with economic conservatives backing Steve Forbes and social conservatives going to Buchanan. The Forbes campaign was an attempt by the libertarian minority of the coalition to overpower the traditionalist majority through the sheer force of money and the support of a portion of the conservative elite (the *Wall Street Journal*'s editorial page and *The American Spectator* blew kisses toward Forbes on a regular basis). The effort backfired, magnifying the influence of Buchanan, the least pro-market candidate, in early primaries.

Few conservative leaders backed Buchanan (though Gary Bauer, Phyllis Schlafly, *Human Events*, and others indulged his departures from free-market orthodoxy). But the Beltway Right inadvertently helped Buchanan to exploit fissures in the coalition by blithely ignoring the sentiments of social conservatives. A steady drumbeat from D.C. had signaled that social issues, notably abortion, had to be pushed to the backburner. Washington conservatives' blind spot on the familial and moral principles that animate the grassroots caused them to underestimate Buchanan's political potential.

The upshot: social and economic conservatives signed a suicide pact. Not only did conservatives fail to control the nomination, they marginalized themselves as well. A fifth of primary voters listed taxation as their most important issue. An impressive plurality (39 per cent) of them backed Forbes even as he was soundedly defeated (with 12 per cent of the vote). Arguably, the effect of his campaign was to set back the cause of tax reform. Buchanan, meanwhile, did even better among dedicated pro-lifers than Forbes did among anti-taxers. When he was going strong, Buchanan simply isolated religious conservatives from the rest of the party. In the end, the man who won the primaries owes very little to either economic or social conservatives; except for Ralph Reed and Pat Robertson, they've mainly given him trouble.

Phil Gramm deserves a good portion of the blame for this debacle. In many ways the logical candidate of the coalition, he apparently assumed he was therefore its inevitable candidate. (In this respect, his campaign was eerily reminiscent of Kemp's in 1988.) Dole, ironically, did a better job of courting it. Gramm might have recovered from his early errors in a longer campaign. But although everyone talked about the speed of the primary process this year, nobody was really prepared for it. Even *NR*, which did the right thing in endorsing Phil Gramm, did so too late to do any good—and that was before Iowa, let alone New Hampshire.



"Once again my opponent has engaged in dirty campaign tricks—trying to hold me accountable for something I was too drunk to remember."

CONSERVATIVES overestimated their power in the nominating process for the same reason Gramm erred. They confused electoral victories for conservative candidates over the last three decades with a deep and systematic belief in conservative ideas on the part of the voters. The conservative "movement" exists in the minds of a fairly small number of people; many who march with it have no deep understanding of its principles. (Nor, apparently, do its pundits.) While there may be an inchoate conservative majority in the country, it's not there just for the asking. That majority has to be continually converted, recruited, and given rousing song sheets.

Conservatives ought to ponder the possibility that their current difficulties are symptomatic of an underlying disease, one whose debilitating effects may last beyond November regardless of the election results. Richard Vigilante saw the danger as early as 1985. Writing in *NR*'s 30th anniversary issue, he warned that the conservative enterprise had become "too large and too busy for philosophical reflection. If it does not find, or is not given, a clear, simple sense of what holds it together, it will split apart, ruptured by confusion and opportunism." Conservatives are not receiving that kind of intellectual sustenance, and are therefore increasingly adrift.

If conservatives are on intellectual autopilot, much of the explanation may lie in the culture of that network of thinkers, writers, and activists, (too) largely located in Washington and New York, whom one might designate collectively as "conservative opinion leaders." They are, in short, an elite—and they act like one. Too many conservatives are operating on a stale and derivative, even if largely accurate, orthodoxy. If popular concerns fit into that

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orthodoxy—for instance, anti-tax sentiment—they can respond readily enough, and win votes by doing so. Other anxieties—notably, over the nation's cultural fragmentation—just pass under their radar screen.

But the Right's strength since the Fifties has largely been built by diagnosing the grievances and anxieties of ordinary Americans and responding to them with real remedies. It is now losing touch with its base and its potential support. Thus conservatives are constantly being caught off guard by swings in the popular mood. (A case in point: the panic over "worker anxiety" after Pat Buchanan's showing in New Hampshire.) On occasion they have even tried to suppress discussion of the public's cultural anxieties. Instead of asking why so many grassroots conservatives opposed NAFTA, for instance, the Beltway elite simply told them they were being paranoid. A political movement in touch with its supporters can tell them when they're wrong; it can't tell them that they're not worried.

One Reaganite, herself a Beltway insider, decries "the pernicious influence of the think-tank approach to life and politics. In the Seventies and Eighties, they did a terrific job of giving policy articulation to inchoate political resentments. But the policy articulation has now floated free of the political ground from which it originally sprang." The think tanks tend to reduce politics to a set of discrete policy areas without providing an overarching philosophy to link them.

Worse, conservative intellectuals seem unable to distinguish between their role and that of conservative politicians. They take care to keep their arguments safely within the confines of the politically "possible" while perhaps seeking to nudge those boundaries rightward. "Too many people are writing op-eds which picture them in the campaign bull session or in the committee mark-up room," complains Lawrence Kudlow. As a result of this sort of positioning, conservative leaders lose sight both of first principles and of their own social base.

Meanwhile, the occasional mention on the Style page has gone to some of their heads. The immersion of many conservatives in the celebrity culture—and particularly their willingness to caricature their ideas in order to make them sellable on television—has been corrupting. With some honorable exceptions, they entertain viewers with their political movement and in the process are domesticated and rendered ineffectual. Blurring the line between politics and entertainment tends to make conservatives—especially those in the Beltway—seem cynical and frivolous.

Indeed, fin-de-siècle conservatism is increasingly concerned with matters of style, straining to make itself appear fashionable. Conservative chic often accompanies a tiresome triumphalism. The implication, notes Kudlow, is that "we've won, we're cool, and you better join us"—as if the goal of conservatives were to replicate the smugness of a liberal Georgetown cocktail party. The result is not so much moral compromise, though it is sometimes that, as the political myopia that was evident during the primaries.

GIFTED and principled political leadership would go far to cure the conservative malaise. But no one since Reagan has emerged to provide a focal point for conservatives. Jack Kemp and Bill Bennett, icons to almost all conservatives just a few years ago, lacked the stomach to audition for the role. Instead, they have gone out of their way to annoy other conservatives; their remaining influence derives mostly from good press. Newt Gingrich, for his part, has proved unable to lead congressional Republicans and the conservative coalition simultaneously in the face of a hostile press. By default, then, Rush Limbaugh is the most visible conservative on the national scene. He is a force for common sense, but, wisely, he has declined to play a role for which he is not suited.

Conservatives cannot afford to wait for another Reagan to come along. Former *NR* publisher William Rusher says, "I share the nostalgia. But the Lord does not always provide you with Ronald Reagans. We were badly spoiled and sometimes you have to do without." It is especially unbecoming for conservatives to complain that Bob Dole dispirits them when their own fecklessness did so much to ensure his nomination. One thoughtful observer of the Beltway Right expresses exasperation with the current conservative mood: "All these people who are lamenting that we don't have a Reagan are betraying his legacy, which was a can-do spirit. If he were at these meetings he'd be asking how we could aggressively push forward, not kvetching that there's no Reagan."

If Bob Dole is elected, it will make a difference whether the dominant faction of the party he leads is rudderless and confused, or vigorous and clear-headed. Tom Pauken, chairman of the Texas Republican Party, warns that if economic and social conservatives do not form a successful governing coalition in the next few years, "You're going to see the splintering of our movement, you'll see conservatives start leaving the Republican Party, you'll see third- and fourth-party movements, you'll see a phenomenon in which people after a while just kind of bail out of the whole political system."

Or conservatives could use the Dole interregnum to regroup, developing a higher degree of ideological self-consciousness and becoming accustomed to the political discipline of governing. They must simultaneously hold the conservative coalition together; keep the GOP anchored within a conservative, antistatist consensus while tackling new cultural and economic anxieties. A movement beset by inertia will be unable to accomplish any of these tasks. So far, however, conservatives don't seem to grasp that there's a problem. □

"Jenkins doesn't work well unsupervised."

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Prague Spring

Eastern Europe is in danger of slipping back toward Communism, but a concerted effort to prevent this is now under way.

PETER W. RODMAN

THE young diplomat George F. Kennan was assigned to the U.S. Legation in Prague in 1938–39 and watched the Czech people reel from the shocks of Munich. "Nothing was left in the popular mind but bitterness, bewilderment, and skepticism," he wrote to a friend in December 1938. Even the people's faith in liberal democracy was shattered by the West's abandonment.

Little did Czechs imagine how long their nightmare would last. Their country was to be liberated from one totalitarian dictatorship only to be enslaved by another—to endure a Communist *coup d'état* in 1948, reinforced by a new Soviet military invasion in 1968.

No wonder, then, that the specter of Western abandonment haunts the Czech political mind. President Vaclav Havel, in an address to Parliament on March 12, warned that "The danger of another Munich is looming over Europe again." As he later explained in an interview with *The Economist*, he was lamenting the "excessive caution" shown by the West in its fumbling response to the Yugoslav crisis and, most of all, in its endless procrastination about admitting the new Central European democracies into the North Atlantic Alliance and the European Union. NATO membership, in particular, Havel saw as "a signal that the West truly wants us and sees us as part of the Western sphere of civilization." But that signal has not yet been given.

Havel's unease is justified—and it demonstrates why time is running out for NATO enlargement. Opponents of enlargement are in the habit of arguing that the present situation in Central Europe is fine—there's no Russian threat at the moment—so why take the risks of expanding NATO? The answer is not simply that historical memory teaches that ambiguity about the status of Central Europe is, in the long run, very unhealthy for the peace of Europe. More concrete and more immediate is the conclusion that the Central Europeans are drawing from the West's hesitation: They see Russia turning ominously in a nationalist direction, and they see the West seemingly paralyzed by its desire not to "provoke" the Russians.

When Generalissimo Franco died in November 1975, one of the arguments often heard for bringing Spain rapidly into NATO was to bolster Spain's democratic institutions and reinforce its solidarity with the West. Six years later, in December 1981, Spain's admission into the Alliance was proclaimed (ratifications took another six months). Today, nearly seven years have already passed since the revolution of 1989, and no invitation has been issued to Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, or any other country to join the Alliance. The NATO foreign ministers last December put off any decisions for at least another year. As for the EU, its summit in Madrid last December refused to set a date for even beginning talks with the Central Europeans on membership. The failure of both the EU and NATO to embrace them by this late date is surely one of the factors contributing to the demoralization and discrediting of the pro-Western forces in these societies, and thus the resuscitation of the neo-Communists.

But more is in store. If the West continues to hesitate, the Central Europeans will not sit still forever; they will eventually conclude that the West is simply unwilling to make a commitment to protect them and that they have no option but to make the best of that situation. They will begin to declare publicly that they really don't need NATO membership all that much (as Bulgaria has already done). They will drift back into the Russian orbit—in the guise of "neutrality," which is the Russian preference. The result will be the Finlandization of Central Europe and the partial reversal of the outcome of 1989. That will be a strategic and moral disaster.

There is, fortunately, a distinguished group of people determined to avoid this outcome. A conference will take place in Prague over the weekend of May 10–12 bringing together statesmen and intellectuals from the United States, Western Europe, and Central Europe, of many political stripes, united on the proposition that Central Europe must be reintegrated as soon as possible into the Western family. The enterprise is called the New Atlantic Initiative, and the roster of its patrons is a distinguished one: Havel himself, Margaret Thatcher, Henry Kissinger, George Shultz, Helmut Schmidt, and Leszek Balcerowicz (former deputy premier of Poland).

Its International Advisory Board includes other eminent Americans such as Colin Powell, Zbigniew Brzezinski, Mitch McConnell, Jeane Kirkpatrick, Donald Rumsfeld, Richard Perle, Richard Burt, Robert Zoellick, William Kristol, Tom Foley, Lane Kirkland, Donald Kagan, and Adrian Karatnycky, and Europeans such as Jean-François Revel, Lord Chalfont, Lord Weidenfeld, Joachim Fest, Hanna Suchocka (former premier of Poland), Geza Jeszenszky (former foreign minister of Hungary), Alain Madelin (former finance minister of France), and Antonio Martino (former foreign minister of Italy).

There is no more appropriate setting for such an event than Prague. Central Europe once held a place of honor in the family of European civilization, before it was artificially and cruelly cut off by the totalitarians from 1938 onward. Prague is where Charles IV built the first university in Central Europe. Mozart was more at home in Prague than in Vienna—indeed, geographically, Prague is to the west of Vienna; it is much closer to Dublin than it is to Moscow.

THE congress in Prague this May is modeled after an event that took place in The Hague in May 1948, which launched the United Europe movement. Seven hundred delegates from 23 countries gathered there, led by elder statesmen and cultural leaders such as Winston Churchill, Anthony Eden, Leon Blum, Paul Reynaud, Prince Bernhard, Salvador de Madariaga, and Ignazio Silone, to promote the cause of Western European integration. The 1996 Congress of Prague will be addressed by both President Havel and

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Czech Prime Minister Vaclav Klaus, by Thatcher and Balcerowicz, and by Ruud Lubbers, former premier of the Netherlands. There will be working groups and final reports on political and security matters, and on economics and culture.

IN THE realm of politics and security, a consensus undoubtedly exists among the Prague participants that the Central European democracies should be brought rapidly into NATO and the EU. This will not be unanimous: there will be eminent participants—like Owen Harries, editor of *The National Interest*—who are uneasy about NATO enlargement. But unanimity will certainly exist on the proposition that the Central Europeans need to be brought immediately into the elaborate networking that has been going on for fifty years among Americans and Western Europeans. A true Atlantic Community has been born since the Second World War; interchange between diplomats, businessmen, academics, journalists, and artistic and literary figures across the Atlantic has become a commonplace of our daily life. It is time to welcome the Central Europeans back to their rightful place in this conversation.

In the cultural dimension, there is much we can learn from each other. Central Europe, reveling in the joys of freedom, can learn some lessons from Western Europeans and Americans about the excesses to which Western culture has been all too subject, the better to avoid them. The Western Europeans and Americans can only find inspiration in the courage of those to the East who clung to Western ideals of freedom through much hardship, even while many in the West came to take them for granted (or turned cynically or frivolously against them).

As the name New Atlantic Initiative implies, the event in Prague will celebrate not only the reintegration of the European family but the consolidation of the bonds across the Atlantic. In the economic area, we may ultimately see a link-up between Europe and the Western Hemisphere as a whole: the idea of a "Transatlantic Free Trade Area" (TAFTA) will be a key item on the Prague agenda. The aim is not simply to ease the chronic trade disputes that have so eroded Allied unity, but to provide an economic structure that can underpin the Alliance and consolidate the West in new ways in a new era. The Atlantic Community is today the natural community of the Western democracies. It is not a supranational entity infringing anyone's sovereignty, but a free association based on a common civilization.

The West's defeat of Soviet Communism has paradoxically left some confusion in Europe and America about what mission is left for our foreign policy. Consolidating the democratic world is surely part of the answer—beginning with the ties across the Atlantic that proved the salvation of European civilization in this century's great struggle against the totalitarians.

Some in America and Western Europe may ask, What is our stake in these other countries? In the 1930s, some in Britain and France asked: Why die for Danzig? Today, Danzig is Gdansk, the shipyard town in Poland where Solidarity was born. The problem is, twice before in this century, the Western democracies realized *after the fact* that the instability of Central Europe undermined the security of all of Europe. Should the Central Europeans lose their faith in the Western democracies and drift back into the Russian orbit, it will only dramatize the restoration of Russian power in the eastern half of the Continent; it will show that once again the European balance of power is up for grabs. The Versailles Conference of 1919 established this belt of small, vulnerable states out of the wreckage of old empires, and since then their fate has been a determinant of all Europe's fate. It is not a matter of choice but a structural reality of European stability. And European stability is a vital American interest.

NATO enlargement is therefore a matter of crisis *prevention* with respect to Central Europe, just as NATO's creation was a matter of crisis prevention with respect to Western Europe. It is to foreclose Russian irredentism and make irreversible the new status quo that resulted from 1989. It is simple prudence; the *failure* to do it would be the more reckless course. And it is not just a favor we do to the Central Europeans, however much they may deserve such a favor. That, at least, is the sentiment of most of the organizers of the Prague Congress.

The young diplomat George Kennan, in personal notes on the Munich crisis written in Prague in October 1938, paid tribute to the "strength, courage, and perseverance" of the Czech people, who "have never been permanently suppressed and have never failed in the end to win their just place in the surging, changing movement of political life." We have an opportunity, finally, to justify that confidence. □

$100 Minimum Wage

If a $5 minimum wage would be good for the country, a $100 minimum wage would be great!

ALAN REYNOLDS

ON April Fool's Day, the *Wall Street Journal* published a diverting little piece in defense of a higher minimum wage. It must have been important, because it took five people to write it—Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin, Commerce Secretary Ron Brown, Labor Secretary Robert Reich, and the Administration's top economists, Joseph Stiglitz and Laura Tyson. These distinguished co-authors "insist that the minimum wage be a living wage." "Every member of the President's economic team believes this step will increase wages without costing jobs." In fact, a "living" minimum wage is not considered an economic issue at all, but "an issue of values and the kind of society we would like to be. . . . If we value work and we value families, we ought to raise the value of the minimum wage."

The President's economic team must not value work and families very highly. They define a "living wage" as only $5.15 an hour. Is this really "the kind of society we would like to be"? Wouldn't we like everyone to be rich? If a small increase in the minimum wage is a good idea, than a big increase must be a bet-

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ter idea. What Clinton's people really ought to be doing, if they have the courage of their convictions, is pushing for a minimum wage of $100 an hour.

In fact, a $100 minimum wage would solve *all* the economic problems that have caused the greatest consternation among economists of the liberal persuasion, including Robert Reich and Laura Tyson.

Consider, first, the impact on average productivity and wages. Critics of U.S. economic policy complain that productivity growth has been "anemic" since their favorite year, 1973, when Americans last enjoyed runaway inflation and wage controls. Weak productivity growth since 1973 has produced flat or falling real wages, declining living standards, and the disappearance of the American Dream. As the Clinton team's *Wall Street Journal* article put it (conveniently obscuring huge differences between the Seventies, Eighties, and Nineties), "Stagnant wages are a 20-year problem."

With a minimum wage of $100, however, the genuine stagnation of productivity and wages that has persisted ever since 1993 would be instantly solved. Average productivity would soar. Only those capable of producing at least $100 worth per hour would be employed, so average productivity and average wage figures would no longer be diluted by all those wretched menial jobs.

Second, ever since Mr. Clinton took office, each year's *Economic Report of the President* has deplored an "appalling" gap between the highest and lowest wages. Once again, the $100 minimum wage provides a quick and certain solution. Very few people earn much more than $100 a hour, so the gap between the highest and lowest wage would narrow quite dramatically.

Third, America's low "savings rate" has been yet another source of anxiety. Since tax rates went up in 1993, Americans have been saving only 4.2 per cent of whatever income they have left. But is it not obvious that people earning $100 an hour will save a much larger percentage of their incomes than people earning $5.15 an hour? Skeptics may complain that very few people will be earning any income at all after the minimum goes to $100. Such nitpicking misses the point. The "savings rate" means the *percentage* of after-tax income

Mr. Reynolds is Director of Economic Research for the Hudson Institute.

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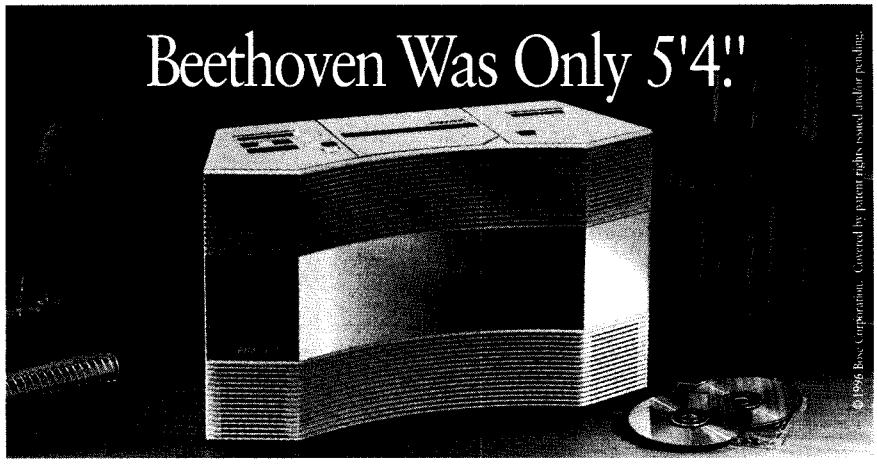

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saved, not how many dollars are saved, and Laura Tyson, among others, has often explained that it is the savings rate that really matters.

The most common objection to a $100 minimum wage is that it would supposedly increase unemployment. Like the confusion between savings and the savings rate, this complaint is based on a statistical misunderstanding. To be counted as unemployed, people have to be looking for a job. In reality, only a few foolish and stubborn people would bother to keep looking for jobs if they could only be hired at $100 an hour or more. With very few people looking for work, it follows that very few would be unemployed.

In short, a minimum wage of $100 an hour would raise average productivity, narrow the gap between low-wage and high-wage workers, increase the savings rate, and have no "significant" effect on the unemployment rate. President Clinton's top advisors appear to agree with this line of reasoning, since they endorse a minimum wage of $5.15. If it makes sense to make it illegal for employers to offer jobs at less than $5.15 an hour, however, why stop there? Why not a minimum wage of $100 an hour? □

Poor before Welfare

Fraternal societies and mutual-aid societies kept the poor afloat long before the welfare state.

DAVID T. BEITO

DESPITE the impressive research by Marvin Olasky, Carolyn Weaver, and other scholars on the role played by voluntary institutions in the history of American social welfare, old attitudes still retain a powerful hold. A case in point is an article in *U.S. News & World Report* entitled the "Myths of Charity." The authors conclude that it "is highly doubtful that charities could pick up all or even most of the slack from the $76 billion to $450 billion in spending cuts now being proposed by Democrats and Republicans in Washington." Citing examples from history, they imply that Americans have never relied (and thus can never rely) on private-sector charities to do the job of the welfare state.

It is indeed true that when measured in dollar amounts, the combined efforts of traditional charities at the turn of the last century, such as the Salvation Army, were small when compared to those of the modern welfare state. The chief problem with such an approach is that it entirely misses the point. It fails to come to grips, for example, with the fact that before the rise of the welfare state, Americans of all classes shared a deep aversion to dependence on either private organized charity or governmental relief. Indeed, there was a great stigma in the folk culture attached to any form of what might be called hierarchical relief (relief in which those who control the purse strings are higher on the socio-economic scale than the recipients).

While most Americans at the time conceded that such agencies performed necessary and positive functions, even the poorest of the poor regarded them as a last resort and then only a temporary one. As a result, the size of the dependent population remained infinitesimal by today's standards. According to a study by the U.S. Census in 1905, only 1 out of every 1,150 Americans (excluding prisoners) resided in a public or private institution of any kind, including almshouses, asylums, orphanages, and hospitals.

The numbers of Americans dependent on relief were also small. As late as 1931, about 93,000 families received mothers' pensions, the state-funded antecedents to AFDC. By comparison, the current AFDC caseload includes 4.6 million parents.

Paradoxically, this rise in the welfare rolls has occurred despite a massive decline in poverty rates since the early twentieth century. This raises an obvious question: How were Americans once able to avoid such dependence? Part of the answer is that they could fall back on a wide diversity of self-help and mutual-aid arrangements, most of which no longer exist.

These arrangements might be called reciprocal relief, in which donors and recipients tended to come from the same, or nearly the same, walks of life; today's recipient could be tomorrow's donor, and vice versa.

Apart from informal giving by neighbors and friends, and assistance provided through church congregations, the major sources of reciprocal relief were fraternal societies such as the Knights of Pythias, Sons of Italy, Polish National Alliance, and Independent Order of Odd Fellows. The activities of these societies dwarfed those of organized charity and governmental poor-relief bureaucracies. In 1920, for example, there were over 10,000 fraternal orders in the United States with roughly 100,000 separate lodges. That year, about 18 million Americans (most of them wage earners) were members—roughly 30 per cent of all adults over age twenty. By way of contrast, about 10 per cent of workers at the time belonged to labor unions.

While fraternal societies differed widely in their methods and goals, in general they featured a decentralized lodge system, some type of ritual, and the payment of benefits in times of sickness and death. Essentially, fraternal orders can be defined as mutual insurance agencies for the provision of social welfare to members and their families.

BY 1910, they increasingly included treatment by a doctor in their menu of services. The favored method was for a lodge to contract with a general practitioner to treat members on a per-person flat-charge basis. Two of the most prominent organizations to rely on this system, known at the time as "lodge practice," were the Foresters and the Fraternal Order of Eagles. The cost of this service was very low. The Foresters charged two dollars a year for a doctor's care; the Eagles charged one dollar. In the case of the Eagles, coverage extended to the immediate family of the member and included home visits.

Lodge practice established a particularly strong foothold in urban areas. In the Lower East Side of Manhattan, for example, 500 doctors had contracts with

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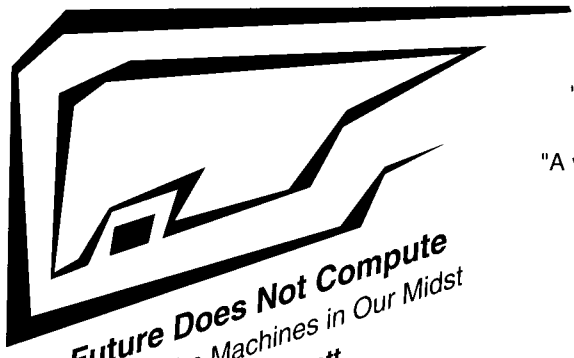
Jewish lodges alone. During the 1920s, there were an estimated 600 fraternal societies among blacks in New Orleans that offered the services of a physician.

Among the least known but most fascinating examples were the fraternal hospitals among blacks. Departing from the general pattern of the decline of fraternal societies as the century wore on, many of these hospitals dated from the 1930s and 1940s. An example was the hospital of the Knights and Daughters of Tabor in Mississippi, which between 1942 and 1964 cared for over 135,000 patients, many of them sharecroppers. As late as 1964, total dues of $30 per year entitled members to major and minor surgery. Like most black hospitals, it was a low-tech enterprise which would probably run afoul of current certification standards. Given the great poverty of the members, however, it represented a major achievement. The recollections of patients indicate that the staff often showed a missionary zeal which made up for many technical shortcomings.

Most leaders of fraternal societies rejected the view that their benefits were in any sense charity. A typical expression of this attitude can be found in an article written in 1905 by an official of the Ladies of the Maccabees. This society was the largest fraternal society controlled exclusively by women and at its height had over 200,000 members. The author asserted that "in fraternity, there is no charity, no humiliation in accepting aid, for it is the right of the member in distress to receive that for which he or she has contributed and the recognized duty of the other members to give." At the same time, she rejected the idea that fraternal benefits were in any sense open-ended entitlements. To the contrary, she specified that members forfeited their right to receive help if they failed to obey the rules of the organization.

In the 1930s, fraternal societies entered a period of decline from which they never recovered. While lodge membership rebounded somewhat in the 1940s, it did not return to its pre-Depression highs. (There have been notable exceptions. Moose International currently has a record membership of one million and operates a thriving orphanage and school.) Historians have pointed to several possible explanations, including the rise of commercial insurance among the working class and the lure of competing forms of entertainment, such as the radio and movies.



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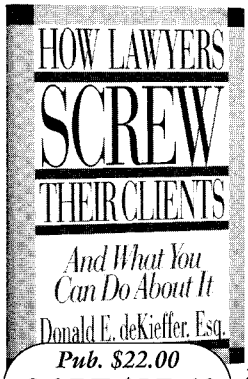

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Another contributor to the decline of fraternal orders was the role of the medical associations. By 1910, the profession had launched all-out war against fraternal medical services, and local medical societies imposed manifold sanctions against doctors who accepted these contracts. One highly effective method of enforcement was to pressure hospitals to close their doors to members of offending lodges. By 1914, Dr. Robert Allen in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* could write, with but slight exaggeration, that "there is scarcely a city in the country in which medical societies have not issued edicts against members who accept contracts for lodge practices."

Another probable cause, although there is a paucity of hard evidence on cause and effect, is the rise of the welfare/regulatory state.

One fact is clear. The first three decades of the twentieth century brought a rapid and unprecedented expansion in government's welfare role. The two leading sources of growth were widows' pensions and workers' compensation. In 1910, no state had either program; by 1931, both were nearly universal. During the 1920s alone, the number of individuals on the widows' pension rolls more than doubled. And this expansion of governmental services coincided with the decline of fraternal membership.

For what it is worth, more than a few leaders of fraternal societies posited a relationship between these two trends. As the magazine of the Fraternal Order of Eagles put it in 1915, "the State is doing or planning to do for the wage-earners what our Order was a pioneer in doing 18 years ago. All this is lessening the popular appeal of our beneficial features. With that appeal weakened or gone, we shall have lost a strong argument for joining the Order; for no fraternity can depend entirely on its recreational features to attract members."

In contrast to their modern counterparts, opinion leaders in the social-welfare field at the turn of the century often displayed a keen appreciation for the impact of mutual aid and self-help. In 1913, for example, Edward T. Devine, a prominent social worker, reminded his colleagues that millions of poor people were able not only to survive but even to progress without recourse to organized charities and government aid:

> We who are in engaged in relief work . . . are apt to get very distorted impressions about the importance, in the social economy, of the funds which we are distributing or of the social schemes which we are promoting . . . [I]f there were no resources in times of exceptional distress except the provision which people would voluntarily make on their own account and the informal neighborly help which people would give to one another . . . most of the misfortunes would still be provided for, and, very probably, the death rate, the sickness rate, the orphan rate, and the rate of physical and nervous exhaustion might be very little, if any higher, than at the present time.

But once the fraternal societies were pushed to the margins of social welfare, Americans began to become dependent on the vagaries of hierarchical organizations controlled by government.

I would be the first to argue against placing too much trust in so-called lessons of history. At the same time, past experience gives ample cause to be skeptical of recent proposals for welfare reform as put forward by either President Clinton or the Congress. These proposals are bound to fall short unless they create an environment in which Americans will once again be motivated to engage in mutual aid and self-help. If the historical record tells us anything, it is that such arrangements cannot be created through political fiat. □

The GOP Goes Green

How Republicans can adopt an environmental agenda that is also a conservative agenda.

JONATHAN H. ADLER

EARTH Day, April 22, has the Republicans running scared. The GOP leadership is scrambling to develop a pro-environment image and respond to charges that Republicans are "anti-environment." Republican leaders urged members to seek tree-planting photo-ops for Earth Day, and environmental videos have been requested for the Republican Convention in San Diego. Newt Gingrich, for his part, garnered an appearance on *Larry King Live* with animals from the Columbus Zoo.

On March 21, the Speaker announced the formation of an Environmental Task Force. Co-chairing the panel are Reps. Richard Pombo of California and Sherwood Boehlert, the New York liberal who has led the charge against environmental reform. The Speaker hopes that the Task Force will develop a "unified environmental message that will lead us into the twenty-first century," and perhaps a plank that can be added to the GOP platform in August. In the meantime, there is increasing pressure to pass a National Heritage Area "park barrel" bill over the strenuous objections of property-rights activists, in order to demonstrate an "environmental victory." Little else is going forward.

Republicans are trying to avoid angering the environmental lobby because prominent members of the party like Boehlert and pollster Linda DiVall have convinced them that they "overreached" in their reform efforts and that there is little popular support for overhauling environmental laws. This conventional wisdom is correct about the public's perception of Republicans as uninterested in environmental protection, but wrong about what to do about it. The GOP's environmental problems are mainly the result of its failure to articulate the ways in which environmental protection can be achieved through reliance on traditional conservative principles.

Offering a moderated version of the conventional green agenda would be a sure recipe for disaster. Republicans will never out-spend or out-regulate the Democrats, and efforts to "me-too" the issue will look lukewarm and insincere. Why vote for a half-hearted environmentalist when you can vote for the real thing? George Bush tried this strategy—

Mr. Adler is Director of Environmental Studies at the Competitive Enterprise Institute and the author of Environmentalism at the Crossroads *(Capital Research Center).*

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issuing more environmental regulations than any previous President—without any increase in environmentalist support.

The challenge to Republicans is to articulate an environmental vision that rejects extensive federal bureaucracies and embraces traditional principles of free enterprise and limited government.

Sound stewardship begins with private property. Therefore protecting private property must be the cornerstone of any conservative pro-environmental agenda. America's proud conservation tradition—as practiced by conservation groups, community associations, and even the occasional corporation—relied upon private stewardship and helped protect numerous species, including egrets, wood ducks, oryx, bluebirds, and bison, from threats to their survival.

Today, environmental decision-making is overly centralized in Washington, D.C. Most environmental problems are regional or local in nature, and they should be dealt with accordingly. There is no reason for Beltway bureaucrats to direct air-quality controls in Texas or hazardous-waste cleanups in Colorado. Washington bureaucrats cannot hope to set rational priorities for every community in the nation, nor should they be allowed to try.

This agenda may sound radical to some, but it is one that Americans are ready to embrace. Poll after poll shows that Americans support greater protection of private property and are willing to devolve responsibility for environmental concerns. This is recognized even on the Left. According to former Clinton pollster Stanley Greenberg, "For ordinary citizens, devolution is a way of making the environmental regime more responsive, more flexible and sensible."

Perhaps the best evidence of this comes from polling conducted by Kellyanne Fitzpatrick on the question of endangered species. She presented voters with three policy options: 1) regulating private land when necessary to protect endangered species and their habitat (the status quo); 2) regulating to protect species but compensating landowners for any property devaluations that result; and 3) forgoing land-use regulation and relying solely upon incentives to encourage private protection of endangered species. Thirty-seven per cent preferred the second option, a staple of most GOP reform plans, and 35 per cent chose the third. Only 11 per cent opted for the status quo. If anything, Republican efforts to reform the Endangered Species Act are too modest, not too extreme.

A new and conservative green agenda cannot be enacted overnight. The prerequisite for enacting a new agenda is changing the terms of the debate. So long as it is perceived to be anti-environmental to oppose existing environmental programs, true reform will be impossible. But conservatives can take heart from the way they have changed the terms of the debate in other areas.

Consider the case of welfare. Conservatives have long opposed the welfare state, but for years were unable to articulate an anti-welfare message that did not come across as anti-poor. Over time, conservatives learned the importance of demonstrating that welfare hurts those whom it is supposed to help, and that private charity can help the poor more effectively and compassionately than government agencies. Today, even the most ardent liberals claim they want to "end welfare as we know it."

Making a similar case for the overhaul of the environmental regulatory state should not be difficult. There have been tremendous environmental gains over the past few decades, but the laws written in the 1970s are reaching the end of their productive lives, while consuming over 2 per cent of GDP. A refinery in Yorktown, Va. spends over $30 million complying with federal air-pollution regulations, only to discover that the same environmental benefits could have been obtained for less than one-third the cost. Yet this alternative was not allowed under existing rules.

Equally important, federal environmental regulation has produced a string of nightmares for ordinary citizens. At the extreme, federal environmental regulations have wrought economic ruin. Landowners in California, for example, were threatened with prosecution if they cleared firebreaks to protect their homes, as this might disturb the endangered Stephens Kangaroo Rat. In the ensuing fires 29 homes—and much of the K-rat's habitat—burned to the ground. Democrats used the stories of "victims" to great effect in the effort to expand government regulations; highlighting the victims of the regulatory state will be necessary to scale it back.

Republicans have also failed to make

(*Continues on page 60*)

Help Block Phoney Davis-Bacon Reform

The Davis-Bacon Act is a depression-era law under which the Department of Labor sets the wages on federal public works projects. It is a wasteful, discriminatory, inflationary pro-union law. It ought to be repealed.

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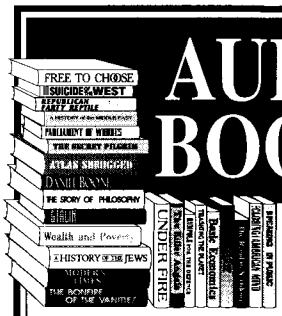

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THE VICE PRESIDENT
WASHINGTON

April 13, 1996

Dear Rusty,

I have to be honest with you. Your last letter disturbed me. I don't think it was fair to call us "too cocky by half." It just so happens that the American people are happy with what we've done and are eager to have us do more of it.

I could quote poll numbers and cite focus-group findings all day. But the truth is, we're going to win because we have a secret plan.

Okay, it's not a completely secret plan. I mean, I'm authorized to tell a few people. Tipper, for one, and you, and Joe Klein makes three . . .

Here it is: for the next six months or so, Bill, HRC, Tipper, and I are pretty much going to live in California full time. Bill's taken a suite at the Sheraton Miramar in Santa Monica, Tip and I are looking at property up north, in Marin County, and HRC is going to kind of divide her time between San Diego and the Central Coast.

I wasn't sure about it at first. But Tipper convinced me.

"I don't know, Tip," I said. "Won't the people in California see right through us?"

"What are you talking about?" she asked. "And don't stop packing."

"Well," I said, "we've already ordered more B-1 bombers, we're talking about cracking down on illegal immigration, and now we're all going to move to the state and pretend it's all a coincidence?"

Tipper held a "Heal the Bay" T-shirt against me. "Does this still fit?" she asked. It did, so she tossed it into the duffel bag.

"Look, Al," she said. "What I know is we start with an electoral-vote deficit of about one hundred. And California has over half that."

"Yes, but how dumb do you think the people in California are?"

"Um . . . If you lived in an area that periodically suffered devastating, property-destroying brush fires, would you keep rebuilding million-dollar houses there?"

"No."

"Okay. Say you had a nice house on the beach. But every year, violent storms would wash it away, leaving you with nothing but a pile of driftwood and some sandbags. Would you, A) move; or B) build a new house in the same place?"

"A?"

"Good. Now say that you lived in an area in which, periodically, the earth shook violently for several seconds, leveling houses, freeways, bridges, destroying property, and killing people. What would you do?"

"Gosh, I'd move."

"But what if you didn't?"

"Why wouldn't I? What am I, stupid?"

And then the light bulb went off above my head. I smiled at Tipper.

I called Dad that afternoon to tell him the news.

"Dad, Tipper and I are going to live in California for a while."

"Wait a sec," he said. I could hear him picking up his highball. I could hear the ice tinkling in the glass as he sipped.

"Is it November already? Did you guys lose?"

"No, Dad," I said as patiently as I could. "We're just going out—"

"Don't tell me. It's a must-win state and you're going to spread a little money around?"

"Well, I might quibble with your gloss, but—"

"Kiddo, let me give you a piece of advice. Wait a sec." I heard him pick up his highball, wipe the sweat off the glass, then take a big sip. "Kiddo," he said, "do you really think you're going to be able to make sense out of that state? They're the people who gave us Ronald Reagan and Jerry Brown in the same year! They put shrimp on their pizza! They hire illegal aliens for a buck an hour to do the cleaning and the gardening and the odd-jobs around the house and then they complain that the illegals are ruining the state! The last time we Southerners had a deal like that we went to war to keep it!"

"Dad—"

"And they keep building their damn houses on fault lines or tinder boxes or storm fronts."

"Dad—"

"You'll go out there, spread the money around, order some bombers and a missile-defense system or two, build more freeways, and do you know what those lunatics out there will do? They'll vote for the Libertarian—or worse: they'll vote for that funny-looking guy with the big ears."

"Prince Charles?"

"No! Then again, maybe—they're weird out there."

And with that, Dad hung up. Or maybe he put his drink down on the phone, I'm not sure.

The point is, Rusty, we have a plan. Gotta go reset my watch!

Your pal, Al

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BOOKS, ARTS & MANNERS

Saint Bernard

MICHAEL ISIKOFF

IN the final scene in *Blood Sport*—James B. Stewart's instant best-seller on Whitewater—President Clinton calls Bernard Nussbaum in late 1994 and seems to express second thoughts about having dumped him as White House counsel. "You're really a good guy, Bernie. Your advice was good advice," Clinton is quoted as saying. Is that really what he said? Clinton never talked to Stewart, so it's not hard to guess where this patently self-serving account comes from. More importantly, what "good advice" can Clinton (or Nussbaum) possibly be talking about? During his stint at the White House, Nussbaum—hardball New York litigator to the core—zealously reinforced the Clintons' natural inclination to stonewall all inquiries into their Arkansas past; more than anyone else, he created a menacing web of suspicion around the whole affair by refusing to let Justice Department officials inspect documents in the late Vince Foster's office. But you'd have a hard time figuring that out from Stewart's account. Here Nussbaum is magically transformed into a Churchillian man of vision, standing up for the "office of the Presidency" and lecturing faint-hearted White House politicos about the "judgment of history."

Blood Sport, by James B. Stewart (Simon & Schuster, 479 pp., $25)

This typifies the problems with a book that has been touted as (but isn't) the final word on Whitewater. Stewart is a masterly storyteller; his portrayal of Hillary Clinton as an avaricious yuppie snob makes for wickedly amusing reading. He also has dug up some damning new details, especially about White House efforts to conceal Mrs. Clinton's role in the travel-office purge that could border on obstruction of justice. (This has gone largely unnoticed except by independent counsel Kenneth Starr, who recently expanded his inquiry to include this matter.) But Stewart is ultimately hostage to his sources; to sustain his richly colorful, fly-on-the-wall narrative, he needed hours of painstaking interviews with Nussbaum and other key players. (How else could he tell us about the bell bottoms and "tight white tank top" Susan McDougal was wearing one "sunny winter day" in 1978?)

Roman Genn

Stewart pulls it off by making a series of questionable bargains: like the government prosecutors he has elsewhere glorified (see his earlier book, *Den of Thieves*), he grants his cooperating witnesses appalling leniency. The result is an absorbing but deeply flawed book: rather than tarnish the reputations of his precious informants, Stewart all too often ignores inconvenient testimony and flinches from tough judgments about the most critical issues and enduring mysteries of the Whitewater saga.

The problem begins in the book's first third, where Stewart relies principally on the recollections of Jim and Susan McDougal to chronicle the murky origins of this busted land deal. Here, Stewart's approach works largely (but not entirely) to the disadvantage of the Clintons: the McDougals are embittered, and they have nasty stories to tell. Having signed up as 50–50 partners in the Whitewater Development Corp. (in hopes of turning undeveloped plots along the remote White River into a vacation mecca), the Arkansas governor and his wife welch on their debts and allow the McDougals to subsidize the venture. When Jim McDougal offers to relieve the Clintons of the burden and spare Mr. Clinton the potential political embarrassment, Mrs. Clinton refuses. "No!" she shouted at Susan McDougal in 1985, according to Susan McDougal in 1995. "Jim told me this was going to pay for college for Chelsea." Among Stewart's more significant passages is Jim McDougal's newly detailed account of how Bill Clinton, sweating heavily from jogging, arrived at his office one morning and pleaded with him to steer legal work from the Madison Guaranty Savings and Loan to his wife. McDougal agreed; he would later insist he remembered the request so well because Clinton perspired all over his new leather-upholstered orthopedic chair.

Stewart probably has it right in broad outline, but many of the details should be taken with a healthy dose of skepticism. At one point, he reports that during the 1992 campaign Mrs. Clinton phoned Susan McDougal demanding that the McDougals give her power of attorney over Whitewater. The timing, under the circumstances, seems preposterous; the campaign was then insisting the Clintons were mere passive investors in Whitewater. It seems far more likely that this phone call took place years earlier, raising some question about Mrs. McDougal's ability to date any of these events accurately. Nor does the manic-depressive, heavily medicated (Prozac

Mr. Isikoff is a reporter at Newsweek.

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A G-Man In Brezhnev's Court

William A. Rusher

With the end of the Cold War, some fascinating stories have begun to come to light. In this bombshell of a book, John Barron, author of the best-seller The KGB, reveals one of the most astonishing of them all — a story so gripping that it will capture the public imagination and permanently alter the balance of opinion on a number of major subjects.

Morris Childs, born Moishe Chilovsky near Kiev in 1902, emigrated to America with his mother in 1911, and in 1921 joined the United Communist Party of America. Working in its ranks, he caught the attention of Communist leader Earl Browder, who arranged for him to attend the Lenin School in Moscow from 1929 - 32. There Morris developed close friendships with two of his instructors: Yuri Andropov and Mikhail Suslov, later respectively the longtime head of the KGB and the Politburo's chief ideologist.

Operation Solo: The FBI's Man in the Kremlin, by John Barron (Regnery Publishing, Inc., 368 pages, $29.95)

The significance of these contacts became apparent just a few years later, when Moscow ordered the American Party to put Morris in charge of Chicago and on the Party's governing Central Committee. In 1945 he became editor of the Daily Worker — only to be fired two years later by Browder's enemies, who had captured control of the Party.

Disillusioned with Communism and weakened by a serious heart condition, Morris was sidelined for several years. It was during those years, through his brother Jack (who was also in the Party, and also disgusted with it), that the FBI recruited both men. Both, it was agreed, would remain in the Party — as "assets" of the Bureau.

The Party's elders knew how highly Moscow thought of Morris, and in 1957 Eugene Dennis, then leader of the CPUSA, appointed Morris as his deputy and put him in charge of all dealings with foreign Communist parties, including the Russians and the Chinese. In April 1958, the Soviets invited him to Moscow.

Thus began Operation Solo, one of the longest and most successful operations ever conducted by the FBI. Over the next 23 years, Morris Childs made 52 separate trips to the Soviet Union and other Communist countries, including China and Cuba. Together with his wife, Eva, and Jack, he smuggled a grand total of $28 million in U.S. currency from Moscow to the waiting leaders of its wholly owned subsidiary, the CPUSA — after the serial numbers on every bill had been carefully noted, en route, by the FBI.

Gus Hall, who succeeded Dennis as head of the CPUSA in 1959, called Morris "my secretary of state," and insisted that he precede or accompany him whenever Hall himself went to Moscow. As for the Soviets, they lionized Morris. A comfortable apartment was set aside for him in Moscow. On almost every visit he spent hours with Andropov and Suslov, who sought his opinion on U.S. politics and similar matters, and confided to him the hopes and fears of the Politburo regarding China, Cuba, and the United States. Boris Ponomarev, head of the International Department of the Central Committee (formerly the Comintern), became another close confidant. In time, Morris also came to know Khrushchev (who hailed him as "the last of the true Bolsheviks"), and later Brezhnev (who, at a dinner in his honor in the Kremlin, pinned the Order of Lenin on his chest). There were also immensely valuable conversations with Mao, Chou En-lai, and Castro, among many others.

Operation Solo was undoubtedly the FBI's most successful penetration effort, and very probably its longest-running. High American officials who saw, but were not allowed to keep, memos reporting the substance of Morris's talks with major Communist leaders (e.g., confirming the rupture between the Soviet Union and Red China, which many experts dismissed as a hoax) became obsessed with their importance, and insisted that the operation continue at all costs. But not even Presidents were told the identity of the "assets" until attacks on the FBI in the mid 1970s caused it to fear that domestic pressures might lead to disclosure.

Mr. Rusher, National Review's former publisher, is a senior fellow at the Claremont Institute.

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There upon President Ford and Secretary of State Kissinger were informed.

In 1981, when Morris was 79, the decision was made that the danger of discovery by Moscow was reaching a critical point, and Operation Solo was reluctantly closed down. Jack had already died, and one fine day in the summer of 1981 Morris and Eva disappeared from their usual haunts, under the Bureau's famous Witness Protection Program. The CPUSA and Moscow searched for them frantically but unsuccessfully, and were left to wonder when they had been "turned" and how many of Communism's deepest secrets they had revealed. Neither the Party, nor anyone else outside a small circle, ever learned that in 1987 President Reagan conferred on Morris Childs, and posthumously on Jack, the Medal of Freedom — the highest civilian award an American President can bestow.

Morris survived to give John Barron numerous interviews detailing Operation Solo, and to witness the fall of the Berlin Wall, which foretold the end of Soviet Communism. He died in June 1991, and the FBI managed to conceal that final fact from his enemies. Eva lived on, rightly proud of all that she and her husband were able to accomplish for the nation they loved.

It will be interesting to see how the liberals handle this one. The whole long story is a tremendous feather in the cap of the FBI, which they have been so eager to criticize for the past twenty years. The individual FBI agents who worked on the operation, in some cases for decades, are correctly regarded by Barron as heroes in their own right, and he tells their personal stories in detail.

Operation Solo can never, of course, compensate for the ten American agents in Eastern Europe who were executed by the Russians when they were identified by Moscow's CIA mole, Aldrich Ames. But it will lift many an American heart to know that, thanks to Morris Childs and the FBI, this country scored a brilliant, almost incredible series of victories in that long twilight struggle known as the Cold War. ■

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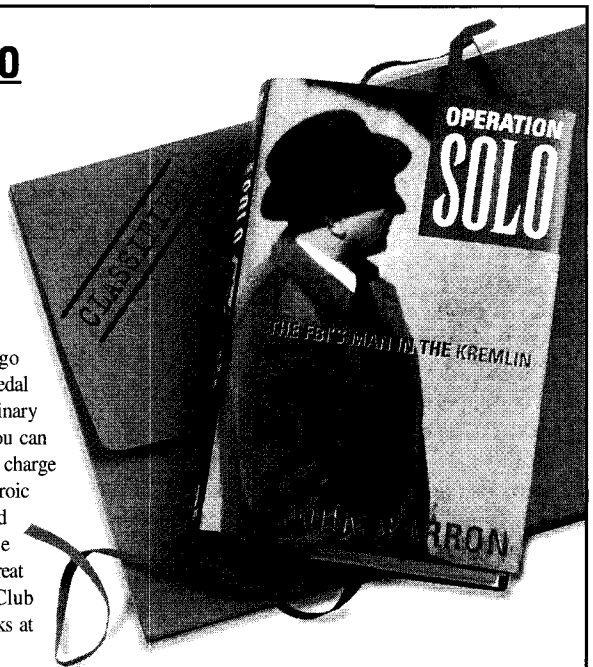

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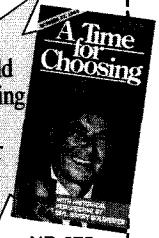

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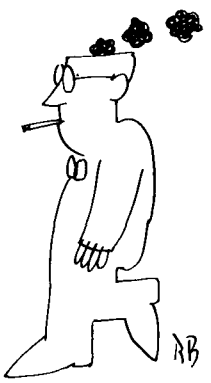
and lithium) Jim McDougal seem the kind of guide one wants to sort out the complexities of a long-ago business deal. In recent court testimony, a psychiatrist who has treated the 55-year-old McDougal testified that mental problems and prescription drugs have caused Stewart's source to suffer 50 per cent more memory loss than the average man his age.

But there is an even bigger problem with Stewart's reliance on McDougal, and it explains why the White House really isn't complaining all that loudly about this supposedly damaging book. By embracing McDougal, Stewart is incapable of doing much at all with the far more serious allegations of former investment banker David Hale. As even casual followers of Whitewater know, it was Hale's charges of deeply rooted corruption among Arkansas's "political family"—allegations that directly implicate both McDougal and Clinton—that reignited the Whitewater controversy in November 1993; his contention that Clinton pressured him to make a fraudulent $300,000 federally backed loan to Susan McDougal led directly to the appointment of the first independent counsel, Robert Fiske. But on this score, Stewart is in a bind—McDougal, of course, has denied everything. In a "Note on Sources" at the end of his book, Stewart tells us, revealingly, that he does not rely on Hale's accuracy in part because "he did not agree to be interviewed by me."



Hale is a self-confessed crook, and I don't know whether he's telling the truth or not. When I first interviewed him nearly three years ago, I found his story intriguing—and an odd one for somebody to make up out of whole cloth. But it is impossible to reach a conclusion on Whitewater without forming a judgment one way or the other, and *Blood Sport* never does. And it is certainly worth noting (because Stewart doesn't) that the professional prosecutors on Starr's staff apparently believe Hale and have found what seems to be corroboration for some of his specifics; they are using him as their chief witness in the current fraud and conspiracy trial of the McDougals and Arkansas Governor Jim Guy Tucker in Little Rock—a trial in which Mr. Clinton is slated to testify.

Stewart's evasions get even worse when he moves his story to Washington and the redoubtable Nussbaum takes over. Among White House insiders, *Blood Sport*'s rehabilitation of Nussbaum is its most egregious feature. Remember Zoë Baird? Lani Guinier? Sprinkled through Stewart's narrative are out-of-the-blue passages suggesting that these fiascos were someone else's fault. It was, of course, the suicide of Nussbaum's deputy, Vince Foster, that has given Whitewater its air of mystery and intrigue. Stewart efficiently dispatches the lunatic conspiracy theories that continue to circulate suggesting the man was murdered. But the problematic part of the Foster story was always the handling by Nussbaum of various documents found in Foster's office after his death. "Bernie, are you hiding anything?" Deputy Attorney General Philip Heymann pointedly asked the White House counsel in an angry phone call shortly after Foster's death. On this issue, upon which so much turns—including the prospect for more criminal indictments—Stewart once again takes a pass.

Consider Stewart's dramatic rendition of the entry by Nussbaum and two other senior White House aides into Foster's office the night of the suicide, an entry that took place literally moments after U.S. Park Police officers had specifically requested that the office be sealed. Stewart gives the authorized Nussbaum version: Nussbaum and Patsy Thomason looked briefly for a suicide note, while Mrs. Clinton's chief of staff, Maggie Williams, sobbed on a couch. Perhaps. But Stewart doesn't even mention a compelling alternative version—the testimony last summer from Secret Service guard Henry O'Neill (a man with absolutely no motive to lie) that he saw Miss Williams hauling files out of Foster's office that very evening.

Two days after the surreptitious late-night entry, Stewart records, Nussbaum fended off Justice Department officials demanding access to Foster's office. White House Chief of Staff Thomas McLarty—apparently doing the Clintons' bidding—doesn't want them anywhere near the place. "Nussbaum pondered the options," Stewart writes respectfully. Giving Justice free rein was "untenable"; there were, after all, "privileged" papers and "sensitive material" on potential Supreme Court nominees and even Mrs. Clinton's "health-care task force." (Imagine the constitutional havoc that might have ensued if anybody had seen those health-care papers!) As later investigations have since revealed, the "sensitive material" also included Foster's private notebook on the travel-office affair, a personal diary recounting his relationship with Mrs. Clinton, and embarrassing files documenting a raging dispute among the Clintons' lawyers over Whitewater's tax status. But Stewart never suggests that any of this might have been what Nussbaum was worrying about.

In the end, Stewart's faithfulness to Nussbaum blinds him to what may be his most important new material—the tragic conspiracy of silence surrounding Mrs. Clinton's role in Travelgate. The recently discovered memo by former White House aide David Watkins for the first time places Mrs. Clinton at the center of the firings of the seven travel-office employees. The initial uproar over Travelgate—and fear of congressional hearings—seems to have consumed Foster in the days before his death. Stewart, who talked to Watkins, almost off-handedly reports that in the middle of the travel controversy Foster pressed upon Watkins the position that "they had to protect 'the client,' meaning Mrs. Clinton. They agreed they wouldn't mention her involvement and pledged to protect her."

For many in the media, the low-grade cronyism of the travel-office putsch (the Clintons' pal Harry Thomason was part owner of a charter firm that craved the business) always seemed too petty to be worth much investigative digging. And of course, Nussbaum's view, faithfully recorded by Stewart, is that the White House was blameless. But here in this secret pact between Watkins and Foster, Stewart may have stumbled upon the true soul of the Clinton White House: the impulse to protect the Clintons at all costs even if only from their political blunders. It is a creed that seemed the guiding principle for an endless parade of Clinton aides and friends last summer, as they trudged up to Sen. D'Amato's committee offering evasions and remarkable memory lapses. And it is a pact that, from all available evidence, continues to this day and includes many more participants—including those who have so successfully spun the author of *Blood Sport*. □

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Better or Worse, Mostly Worse

ELIZABETH FOX-GENOVESE

LIKE Nero, fiddling while Rome burned, Americans have steadfastly denied the reality engulfing us. The siren songs of sexual liberation and individual self-realization, abetted by the transformation of our economy, have lured us to the deadly reefs on which marriage, as known throughout history, is breaking up.

So, without ever admitting that two and two do make four, we contemplate the mounting evidence of divorce, cohabitation, single motherhood, child abuse, and violence perpetrated by children, not to mention children's suicide, alcoholism, and drug abuse. Many have attended to the signs, but they almost unanimously find someone to blame: conservatives charge women with neglecting their responsibilities; feminists charge men with brutality; everyone deplores deadbeat dads. Some preach restoration of family values, others sexual equality and joint-parenting, still others look to a rejuvenation of fatherhood. All these charges avoid the real problem: Marriage as the essential social unit —the glue that binds men and women to one another and, from infancy, binds children to society—has disintegrated.

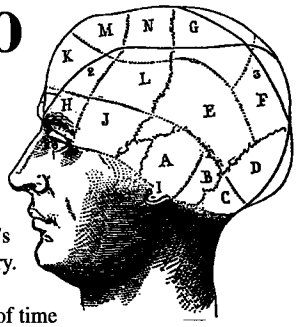
In *The Abolition of Marriage*, Maggie Gallagher forcefully lays out the essentials. Feistily challenging the complacency of those who promote the "good divorce," she summarizes the massive evidence that, short of pathological brutality, divorce is never good for children and not much better for adults. In replacing the aspiration to marriage with the "divorce ethic," we have acquiesced in a vision of family as nothing but "a package of roles related to the function of caring for and rearing children"—roles that might appropriately be assigned to professional caretakers.

Miss Gallagher is masterly in dismantling, one by one, the prevailing nostrums about roles, relations, partnerships, and all the rest that have drained marriage of its significance, meaning, and, yes, sanctity. Remarriage after divorce does not solve problems and often exacerbates them. Stepfathers rarely invest as much time and love in children as biological fathers and are much more likely to abuse them. Sexual abuse is overwhelmingly perpetrated by stepfathers and mothers' live-in boyfriends. Meanwhile, divorced biological fathers rapidly lose their sense of responsibility for children with whom they do not live. Pre-marital cohabitation does not improve marriages' chances for success; it weakens them. Divorced mothers can rarely provide the attention, resources, and opportunities children need, and children of mothers who never married fare even worse. Nothing serves children as well as the presence and commitment of their biological father. Should you doubt the importance of commitment, consider that children of widows do much better than those of divorced or never-married mothers.

The delusion that divorce and single motherhood don't harm children presumably originated in adults' need for comfort and reassurance. No matter how

Mrs. Fox-Genovese is the author most recently of Feminism Is Not the Story of My Life.

TAKE YOUR MIND TO PLACES IT HASN'T BEEN FOR YEARS.



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selfishly we behave, we and our children will be okay. With respect to the needs of children, that wisdom amounts to nonsense, and it serves adults no better. Thinking to have liberated ourselves from the bondage of undying promises and their attendant responsibilities, we have condemned ourselves to a wasteland of anomie, loneliness, and despair.

The Abolition of Marriage: How We Destroy Lasting Love, by Maggie Gallagher (Regnery, 300 pp., $24.95)

Life without Father: Compelling New Evidence That Fatherhood and Marriage Are Indispensable for the Good of Children and Society, by David Popenoe (Free Press, 275 pp., $25)

The Case for Same-Sex Marriage: From Sexual Liberty to Civilized Commitment, by William N. Eskridge Jr. (Free Press, 290 pp., $25)

We are beginning to acknowledge the burdens that sole responsibility for children imposes on women, especially if they are poor. We have been slow to admit the tremendous cost that men's freedom to leave or never commit to marriage imposes on us all, starting with men themselves. Men who father illegitimate children disproportionately end in jail, addiction, or premature death.

One may, without exaggeration, argue that the entire history of civilization has been a sustained attempt to bind men to women and children—literally to domesticate their propensity for aggression and sexual irresponsibility. Within the past few decades, that project has unraveled. David Popenoe's fine study, *Life without Father*, sketches some of the historical background and, especially, provides a searing picture of contemporary failures and their cost. Fatherhood—good fatherhood—grounds the well-being of children; its absence painfully cripples them and all of us. Whatever we may like to believe, neither mothers alone nor the village can substitute, and the personal failings of individual men inescapably result in "a major public crisis."

Nothing more clearly underscores the demise of marriage than the case for same-sex marriage, which William Eskridge forcefully argues. Starting from the same premise about men's propensity for sexual adventure as Miss Gallagher and Mr. Popenoe, Mr. Eskridge insists that same-sex marriage would help "civilize" the gay community as well as bring overdue respect. On what grounds, he asks, should gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transsexual Americans be denied the social, psychological, and economic benefits of marriage? Himself a lawyer, Eskridge traces the legal interpretation of marriage through a series of Supreme Court cases, arguing that during the twentieth century the goal of marriage has changed from the promotion of procreation to the promotion of "personal and interpersonal fulfillment." Using the now-discredited anti-miscegenation laws as analogy he further insists that the Constitution guarantees each individual a fundamental right to marry regardless of sexual orientation.

If one agrees to Eskridge's premises, one has to acknowledge the cogency of his case. The problem lies in the premises. Do we indeed see marriage purely as individual fulfillment to be entered into and abandoned in accordance with our fluctuating desires? More portentously, have we reduced the role of children in marriage to their mere procreation? Even a cursory glance at our world suggests that those premises do faithfully capture our attitudes toward marriage. But a second glance, through the lens of Miss Gallagher and Mr. Popenoe, suggests that, when we act on those premises, we sacrifice the well-being of our children and the stability of our own lives to the flighty pulls of sexual desire and romantic love.

There is a disquietingly disingenuous quality in Eskridge's reduction of children to "procreation," since, as we well know, rearing children requires considerably more than merely bringing them into the world. Human reproduction has always depended on a heavy infusion of protection and education, and children's need for both has only increased in our time. But then, adults also need something more than the gratification of their individual desires: we require a sense of purpose and binding commitment. Sadly, recent experience suggests that neither logic nor the narrow pursuit of self-interest can capture the fundamental needs that bind individuals to one another or into society. Indeed, as I finished *The Case for Same-Sex Marriage*, I could not but think that only religion offers a purpose that justifies self-sacrifice in the interest of a larger social—and personal—good.

Miss Gallagher movingly reminds us of the ultimate value of a binding commitment. Insisting that the meaning and end of marriage is love, she describes marriage as the embodiment simultaneously of infatuation and of justice: to disregard the claims of all persons but one in the attempt "to love just one other person the way God loves everyone." Only by pledging ourselves to such a union can we hope to raise responsible sons and daughters who will, in turn, be capable of the marriages that sustain civilization. Today, she writes, "it is not free love but the vow that is daring." We will never do anything more remarkable than to pledge ourselves to one other human being. The abolition of marriage strips us of that last possibility for heroism. □

A Genre Is Born

DIGBY ANDERSON

THERE is nothing better calculated to make some reviewers' hearts sink than a feminist tract. Not this reviewer. On the contrary, I am a convert. Ever since I read Carol Adams's *The Sexual Politics of Meat*, I can't get enough—of feminist tracts, that is. Her jolly little number, which ends with the resounding injunction, "Eat rice, have faith in women," pursues the parallels between carving meat, rape, and racism. What we have in this sort of writing is nothing less than a genre. It's quite pointless to show inconsistencies in evidence or argument. One should just sit back and enjoy it. There is something hilariously attractive in the way these ladies pick up a dotty idea and solemnly and relentlessly pursue it.

Am I Thin Enough Yet? The Cult of Thinness and the Commercialization of Identity, by Sharlene Hesse-Biber (Oxford, 191 pp., $25)

Mr. Anderson is the editor of This Will Hurt *(National Review Books).*

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The things that put off first-timers—the strained interpretations of texts for unlikely readings, the failure to present and confront discrepant evidence, the grim intonation of the trite, the manic tunnel vision, the promiscuous mixture of pretentious and long-winded academic style with manifest and naïve ideology—all become familiar friends for the seasoned reader.

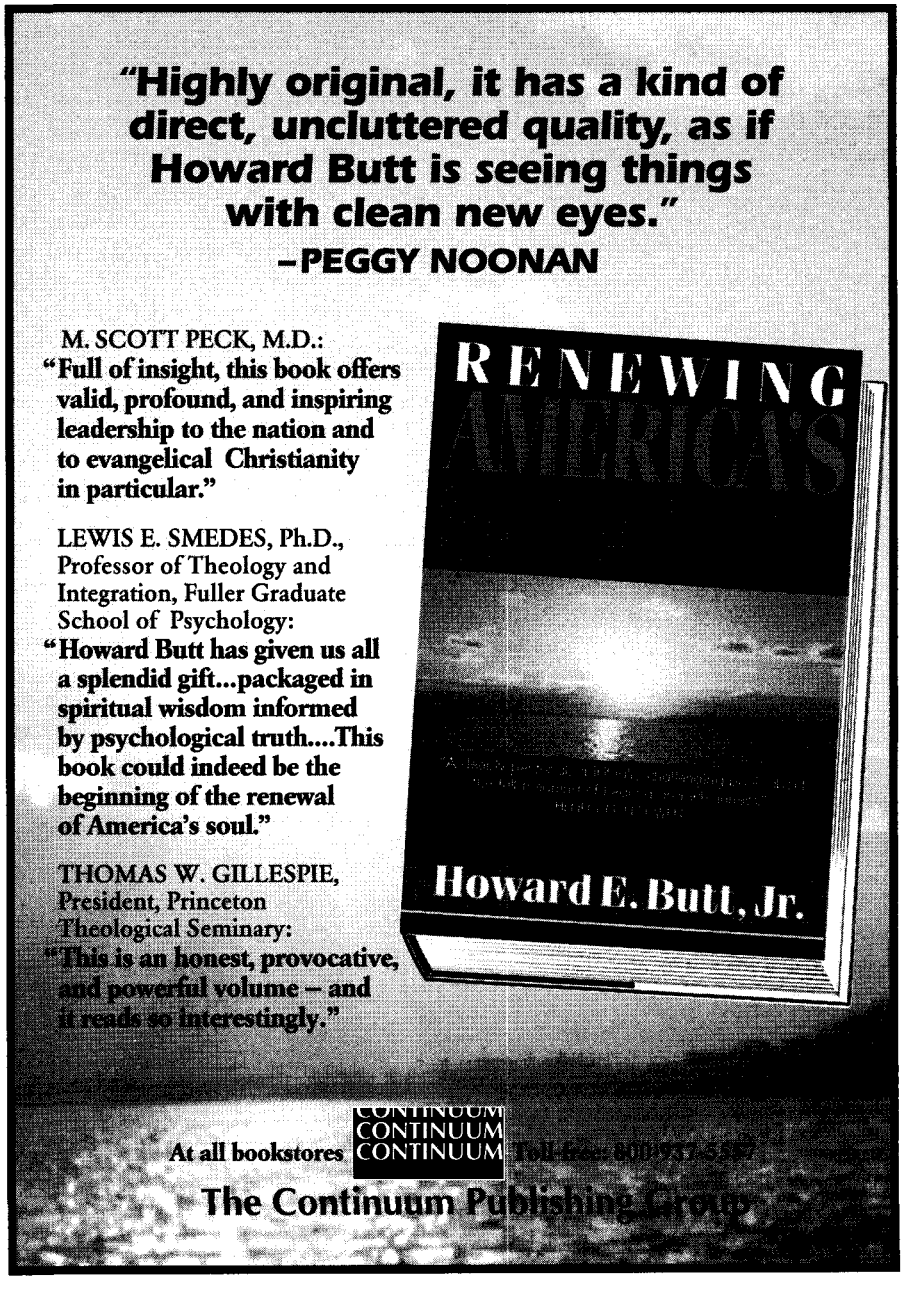
The omens are good. It takes a peculiar talent to write a book about why American ladies are obsessed with thinness when everyone else and the facts say that they are fatter than ever. And Mrs. Hesse-Biber has got the genre's language just right. I was encouraged by her early ringing call to "examine the various manifestations of patriarchy . . . a system of interrelated social structure and practices in which men dominate, oppress, and exploit women." This is good. A lesser soul might have thought that just "oppress" would do.

And surely the author must get a red star for chiding us for thinking that the struggle against sexual harassment and ageism is enough. What, she says, about weightism? Will we never learn? The section on "the rise of consumer culture and the practice of corseting" is riveting. Conditioned as I am by hegemonic patriarchal repression, I had never really understood before how corseting "demonstrates women's emerging roles as both consumer and commodity during the rise of capitalism." How could we have failed to see that "thin waists symbolize passivity, degradation, and more perversely, bondage"? She is first-rate on capitalism throughout. Quite untroubled by brute facts and opinions of the world, she wo-manfully carries on assuming it's bad and assuming that all we readers assume it's bad too.

The main thesis is that patriarchy and capitalism coerce ladies into thinness. Denied proper participation in the world of work, they seek security in marriage. To get their man they succumb to his demands that they be thin and dive into the lavatory to make themselves sick after eating. The evil food industry urges them on, intent on "reaping" profits (capitalism is repeatedly "reaping" in this book; I liked "profit-building juggernauts" too). This, some may object, is the same food industry so often blamed for making ladies fat. Mrs. Hesse-Biber is magnificent when faced with such churlish complaints. It makes them fat *and* thin, so it's doubly bad.

But quite rightly she usually does not allow herself to be sidetracked by silly criticisms. For she has to take us on to change the world. Social activism is the thing. Let's boycott the profit-building juggernauts. However, I have to say she is weak on boycotts. She appears only to boycott some industries, like cosmetics, food, and pharmaceuticals. Had she thought of her sisters fighting battles against the car industry's exploitation (yes, and oppression and domination) of women in its advertisements, battles against the alcohol industry, against firms hurting the environment and lady animals, indeed against the whole advertising industry, she would have seen (like Carol Adams) that the struggle is all one. Nothing less than a total boycott (surely girlcott) of everything will do.

But her other solutions are interesting. She is surely right to mention the value of the "exciting" German project in which women use their own bodies as objects of study ("Each woman chooses a body part—hair, legs, and so on—and then asks others to recollect events in their lives focused on this area"). Even more challenging is the idea of "a one day bike ride to promote awareness." How does she end? Can she match Carol Adams's "Eat rice, have faith in women"? Not quite. But she goes for a simple message that we can all understand and wholeheartedly support. It is beautiful in its pathetic predictability. To make a new femininity, women must have "space." That alone must give Sharlene 9 out of 10. □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A Little Knowledge

ANTHONY LEJEUNE

"AN incredible three million copies of her books have been sold in America," boast Anne Perry's British publishers. Incredible, no; if they say so, I believe them. A bit puzzling, yes; the reason for such popularity is not altogether clear. But the operative word in that boast is "America." Although Miss Perry is a British writer, living in Britain, her books are much less well known on the eastern side of the Atlantic. And that's not puzzling at all.

Her novels, set in Victorian London, are—like those of Martha Grimes, an American mystery writer who has set nearly all her books in Britain—full of slight solecisms and anomalies liable to set sensitive English teeth on edge. They have been praised by the upmarket American press for their historical authenticity and atmospheric plausibility but authentic and plausible, to anyone with the slightest knowledge of the period, they are certainly not.

Cain His Brother, by Anne Perry (Fawcette Columbine, 390 pp., $22.95)

Traitors Gate, by Anne Perry (Fawcette Columbine, 411 pp., $21.50)

Miss Perry's books fall into two, scarcely distinguishable, series, both featuring police detectives who pursue their investigations through foggy streets to the clip-clop of hansom cabs, from the drawing rooms of Mayfair to the stews of Limehouse. In the latest, *Cain His Brother*, ex-Inspector Monk (now an "Agent of Inquiry," long before Sherlock Holmes claimed to be the only "consulting detective" in the world) searches for a missing man in the fever-ridden slums of the East End. His quarry, a saintly character, had an evil twin brother, who may have murdered him: but there is no body, and the villain is quite confident that none will be found. A trial ensues nevertheless, with a melodramatic denouement.

The mood is gloomy throughout, and, squalor being squalor, well-founded in sociologically inclined history books. So far, so plausible—until the narrative moves into the more socially complex regions of the Bar and the professional classes, where it suddenly becomes apparent that the author does not know what she's talking about. London barristers don't have "offices" in a street near Lincoln's Inn Fields: they had, and have, chambers in one of the Inns of Court. They don't "approach the witness stand" like Perry Mason. Nor are English clergymen called "Reverend Wyndham"—or, at least, they weren't before Hollywood's influence.

In all Miss Perry's books, modern prejudices, particularly about class and the position of women, are constantly insinuated and heavily emphasized. Victorians, however radical, simply didn't think in those terms. Gentlemen, she tells us, "only dabbled, they did not actually work"; which would have astonished some very energetic Victorian gentlemen. As for women, they were "the weaker vessel, expected to weep, to lean on others"; which would have amazed many tough-minded Victorian ladies. On the other hand, no respectable Victorian man would ever have said "what the hell" in the presence of a lady. Still less would a respectable woman have used such language herself ("bloody incompetent generals").

The most recent book in Miss Perry's other series, *Traitors Gate* (why no apostrophe?), set in higher social circles, was even more liable to such solecisms. In it Superintendent Pitt, aided by his wife, Charlotte, investigates a murder in a gentlemen's club. The crime involves Important People: it touches on the colonial struggle for Africa and a sinister anti-democratic conspiracy, the Inner Circle.

Miss Perry has conscientiously studied the background details. She knows London's street plan, what songs were sung in the music halls, what fashions the ladies wore: and she makes sure we know she knows. The effect is spoiled by things in some ways less obscure but perhaps not quite so readily swotted up. The club she writes about, crucial to the story, has a "manager" and "stewards," like an American club, not a "secretary" and "waiters"; it has a "foyer" and a quite impossible inner room for senior members only. The club's domestic arrangements are important because they affect the solution, described as "very clever and very efficient" but in fact absurd.

Even that sort of thing might not matter if the Victorian *feel* were right. There are some other curious Americanisms—"As close to Westminster as we live" (no Englishman, now or then, would insert the first "as"), "French doors" instead of "French windows," and (admittedly not often) some hilariously dreadful dialogue—"Must be damned urgent to seek a fellow out at his club, what?" When a high flyer at the Colonial Office is described as academically outstanding because he graduated from Cambridge at age 23, one can only ask what took him so long. Again we have the word "bloody" used in the presence of, indeed addressed to, a lady.

Has Miss Perry never seen *Pygmalion*? Has she never read Victorian novels—Trollope, Wilkie Collins, *The Dolly Dialogues*, *The Four Feathers*, or even the Sherlock Holmes stories? Or another, equally famous, Victorian tale which had better not be named for fear of giving away the twist at the end of *Cain His Brother*? The surprising answer is "Possibly not."

A glance at her biography, as given by the publishers, reveals that, although seemingly a conventional middle-class, middle-aged Englishwoman, she grew up in New Zealand, worked for a while in California, and now lives in a remote Scottish village. But that's not all.

While *Traitors Gate* was in preparation a movie called *Heavenly Creatures* was released, about a forty-year-old case, famous in New Zealand still, in which two young girls, for psychologically obscure reasons, battered to death the mother of one of them. A New Zealand reporter somehow got on the trail of Miss Perry. When asked, she immediately admitted that she had been one of those girls, though not the one whose mother was murdered. She had served five and a half years in a women's prison, was released at age 21, returned to England, where she had been born, and changed her name.

She claims to remember little of the murder and to have long ago lost touch with the other girl. She has never denied her identity but, naturally enough, doesn't like talking about it. She has become a devoted Christian. But she did miss out on a good deal of education.

Mr. Lejeune is NR*'s longtime London correspondent.*

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The publicity that followed the revelation has been handled not so much discreetly as carefully, with well-controlled articles and interviews. Everybody on both sides of the Atlantic who is at all interested in her books now knows the facts. Despite her initial unsophisticated fear that her publishers might drop her if they knew, the story has predictably helped, not harmed, her sales.

All credit to her for making a new life and a successful career. However, I cannot help feeling, as she probably does, that it would be better, from a literary as well as a personal point of view, if we didn't know. People reading her books are now bound to ask: "Can you tell?"

The most spectacular parallel instance is that of James Morris, who underwent a highly publicized sex change while writing his (or her) trilogy about the British Empire. Nobody can read those excellent books now without trying to see the join, the point where the sex change happened. But there is no perceptible join. Nothing alters.

This provokes a much broader and deeper question about authors in general. Which is the real person—the one whose apparently intimate acquaintance we make on the page, or the frequently disappointing figure whose hand we may shake or whom we may see blathering on a television talk show? How do we feel about a woman protagonist, perhaps narrating in the first person, created by a male author—or the other way around? Would we feel differently were we unaware of the author's sex?

Are the currently fashionable courtroom thrillers distinctly better for being written by lawyers? Or *romans policiers* for being written by policemen? Erle Stanley Gardner was a lawyer and Dashiell Hammett had been a private eye, but they both learned more from working on *Black Mask* than from experience in the field. Carroll John Daly, the first begetter of the hard-boiled thriller genre, was rather a nervous man who once thought he should carry a pistol to see what it felt like—and was promptly arrested. Mystery fiction need not be realistic; realism is not the point.

The same applies to espionage fiction. Some writers of good spy stories did have experience in intelligence work, but you would never guess it from their unrealistic tales. Yet John le Carré's not very happy time in the British Secret Intelligence Service provided the pungency of his novels. And the Rumpole stories would be much less fun if John Mortimer were not so familiar with lawyers and judges.

So which is the rule and which are the exceptions? Truthfully, there is no rule. Trying to deduce one leads only into what le Carré calls "a wilderness of mirrors." Homer and Shakespeare are enhanced, not diminished, because we know so little about them. Anne Perry's work would lose nothing if we knew less about her. □

FILM

Sordid Affairs

JOHN SIMON

DAVID O. Russell's wretched first film, *Spanking the Monkey*—about masturbation and incest—was made on the cheap but garnered considerable acclaim. On the strength of it, Russell was given a chance to make a major, all-star movie, ***Flirting with Disaster***, which proves equally smutty, sophomoric, and witless. That the vast majority of reviewers found it delightful and hilarious attests to the sorry state of our film criticism, if not indeed our entire culture.

Mr. Simon is NR*'s film critic.*

Sexual comedy is a perfectly legitimate genre, but it is unlikely to be well executed by someone who is neither comfortably at home with his subject, nor at a sufficient philosophical remove from it. *Flirting with Disaster* begins with a *fellatio interrupta*, about to be performed on Mel by his wife, Nancy, who recently bore their first baby; it ends with the film's credits interspersed with shots of three couples from the film having intercourse in different positions, as if in an illustrated sex manual. In between, the film oozes a self-congratulatory salaciousness, and a sense of the comedic that would not have done a backwoods vaudeville team proud.

Mel is happy enough with his adoptive parents (George Segal and Mary Tyler Moore), identified only as Mr. and Mrs. Coplin, which is typical of a script that treats people as mere plot devices. Yet Mel has entrusted the original adoption agency with tracking down his biological parents; it duly sends Mel, Nancy, and the baby to San Diego and a Mrs. Swaney, Mel's alleged mother. The agency assigns to them a young airhead, Tina Kalb, former dancer and current psychologist, working on a PhD thesis on adoption. She shoots everything with her camcorder, apparently the device with which doctoral theses are written nowadays. Why Mel and Nancy should put up with her is a mystery.

Tina, moreover, is in the midst of a divorce, and plays with the notion of becoming impregnated by the first reasonably intelligent man she might meet. What makes her think that Mel—written by Russell as a jerk, and portrayed by Ben Stiller as a creep—is such a reasonably intelligent man is inscrutable; soon enough, though, Mel and Tina are pouncing on each other behind Nancy's barely turned back. Russell's idea of comedy is that whenever two people start going at it, some large object should be overturned with a crash, which allows for increasingly hilarious *coitus interruptus*es.

Because of a glitch in the agency computer, the San Diego parent proves to be an error, although, like her spacy, blonde twin daughters, an authentic weirdo made nuttier by a farcical Southern accent. Next, Mel, Nancy, Tina, and baby are trekking to the snowy wastes of the Midwest, where a truculent truck driver appears to be the real father. There are delicious misadventures, but the man isn't the real father, after all. The real parents are a pair of ex-flower children, now affluent artists in the Southwestern desert. Yet our Telemachus must first contend with a pair of Feds who want to arrest him for demolishing a post office while learning to drive a truck. These two, it emerges, are a homosexual married couple, one of whom is bisexual enough to enjoy licking women's armpits. He turns out to have been Nancy's high-school beau, so, in due time, she indulges him in his little hobby as they shower together.

Our traveling circus, now augmented by the two Feds, reaches the mansion of the really real parents (Lily Tomlin at

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her most equine, and Alan Alda), the Schlichtlings, whose name everyone mispronounces, sometimes in scatological ways. These loonies have another son, a morose acidhead who makes mischief I can't go into. Eventually, the adoptive parents also show up on the scene for a game of musical cars, in which everyone mistakes someone else's vehicle for his own, with drastic results. Suffice it to say that Nancy's licked underarm areas are not the only pits the movie attains to.

If only the dialogue had some wit, or the sexual allusions occasionally abated, or someone resembled a human being! But there is no such respite, and Russell has his actors behaving like grinning participants in a demolition derby, with everyone leering at everyone when not winking at the camera.

Téa Leoni cannot invest Tina with even the threadbarest credibility; Lily Tomlin and Alan Alda seem to have overdosed on laughing gas and incurred an indelible smirk; George Segal and Mary Tyler Moore, neither of whom has aged well, behave like *commedia dell'arte* characters who have lost their *arte*. Only Patricia Arquette, as Nancy, salvages some dignity (even the baby has a besotted look), but beware of a cast in which she comes off best.

■ Based on a novel, *Farmer*, by Jim Harrison, ***Carried Away*** is the story of Joseph Svenden, a Midwestern farmer *cum* schoolteacher, aged 47, in the last year of his teaching career. The school board has suddenly decided he lacks proper academic qualification. The locale is Howardsville—a forced-sounding name—where Joseph, limping from a childhood accident, conducts a long-standing affair with a fellow teacher, Rosealee, whom he has loved since their own high-school days, but who married his brilliant best friend. That chap died in Vietnam; now, finally, Rosealee is putting gentle pressure on Joseph to marry her.

But Joseph sees no reason to marry. He lives with his cancer-afflicted mother, who, as his friend Evans, the good country doctor, tells him, has some six months to live. Mother would like to see Joseph marry Rosealee, but another circumstance arises to confirm his unwillingness. A Major Wheeler moves to Howardsville, with a crazy wife and a 17-year-old daughter, Catherine, who, it turns out, has had too much sex in the big city. Coming into Joseph's English class seemingly in mid-semester, Catherine might as well be from another planet—so superior to the other students in looks, attire, and a precociously full-fledged Mona Lisa smile.

Major Wheeler rents some space for Catherine's horse in Joseph's barn, which gives the girl a chance to ogle Joseph seductively from both the back of the classroom and the back of her horse when she comes to ride him. Pretty soon she is in the hayloft, removing her shirt; Joseph, who has struggled to resist, succumbs. The affair progresses, and Joseph finds himself satisfying both women, subject only to Rosealee's occasional demurs. Suddenly, Catherine, too, wants him to marry her, which he won't do either; then various people start finding out what's going on.

To the film's credit, although disaster seems to be lurking in the corners, nothing melodramatic ever happens. The story manages to unfurl with some credibility and an occasional touch of humor, at an unhurried yet not foot-dragging pace, as Joseph limps back and forth between his saucy young student and his exasperated colleague. There is no obvious reason for the screenplay by Ed Jones and Dale Herd, with its tasteful and even touching nude scenes, not to draw us in. Somehow, it never does.

The film mistakes ordinariness of language and characterization for maturity and artistic integrity. It never fully conveys why Joseph doesn't want to marry his ever-beloved, long-since-widowed Rosealee, there being no obstacle whatsoever. It is likewise arbitrary for him to be denied the right to teach, since we are told what a good teacher he is. We do not feel his talked-about friendship with Rosealee's late husband, nor do we get much of a sense of his relationship with his mother, who in the end seems much smarter than she had been up till then.

Bruno Barreto directed competently, Declan Quinn photographed sensitively, and Bruce Broughton's music is inoffensive, which, these days, is pretty remarkable. But the casting doesn't work. Dennis Hopper, a specialist in psychotic killers, cannot give Joseph depth. We see no reason for either Rosealee or Catherine to want him that badly. Amy Locane does not for a moment pass for 17, but is otherwise acceptable. As her father, Gary Busey has his own menacingly smiling, faintly sinister quality that does not belong here. Julie Harris is a bit too saintly as Joseph's mother; as Dr. Evans, Hal Holbrook, who used to tour the country as Mark Twain, disturbingly reverts to that persona.

Although too young for Rosealee, Amy Irving gives the film's outstanding performance. But her very authenticity makes Joseph seem less worthy. And the dialogue only rarely achieves that little something extra to raise it beyond mere truth to life to the truth of art. □

ART

Up with Abstraction

JAMES GARDNER

A LEAFLET accompanying the Guggenheim's massive "Abstraction in the Twentieth Century" show introduces children to the joys of non-representational art. It begins with an illustration of one of Vasily Kandinsky's jazzy geometrics from the Twenties. "How do these colors make you feel?" the leaflets asks. There follows one of the juicier passages from Pollock's *Number Three*. "Put your arms in the air and pretend to toss and drip paint carefully onto the floor." Finally, a detail of *Sans II* by the short-lived and ever-anguished Eva Hesse, with the query, "What do you think these materials feel like?"

So we have come, at last, to this: One of the most radical revolutions, perhaps the most radical, in the history of visual expression, a revolution that once was met with anger and mockery when not ignored, a revolution that raised cries of Communist plots, has now been so thoroughly assimilated into our culture that children, apparently, can appreciate it without much of a stretch.

It is precisely this acceptance that is the hidden theme of this most celebratory of shows. There is no heavy mes-

Mr. Gardner is NR*'s art critic.*

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sage here, as so often in recent exhibitions, whose art seems to be nothing but a pretext for verbiage. Rather we have one example after another of fine abstract art from the past nine decades, art that is unique to our century, and as such entirely our own. One could point out many omissions: the Bauhaus and the Russian avant-garde are given short shrift, and especially in the latter part of the show one may ask why no room was allotted to Pat Steir, Phillip Taafe, or Julian Schnabel, who are fundamental to understanding the state of abstraction at this time. Yet it must be emphasized that this is not an historical exhibition.

Primarily in the nature of a celebration, this show presents us with an unbalanced, prejudiced, and irrepressibly enthusiastic ode to the most representative development in the visual culture of our century. Among its many beauties are Piet Mondrian's *Composition 1916*, a densely electric tangle of lavender, peach, and pink squares. Kandinsky's far more eccentric and lyrical *Painting with White Border* from three years earlier, a moody interpretation of a rainbow of tags and patches, reveals its origin in Russian folk art. From half a century later, there is Yves Klein's *Untitled Blue Monochrome*, as deep and dense and fanatical a massing of blue as you will ever see. And from a generation later, Gerhard Richter's superb *December* with its icy accumulation of blacks and greys, relieved only by patches of mocha brown, all given the famous stripped-canvas treatment he pioneered.

Such art fulfills the famous claim of Walter Pater that "All art is constantly aspiring to the condition of music"—his way of saying that while music's form was its content, all the other arts, though aspiring to this condition, were still trammeled by the ideas behind them: paintings by what they depicted, be it a bowl of fruit or the Prince of Wales; poetry by ideas contained in the words; etc. To break free from such restraints—for they were perceived as such—was, in an important sense, the grand strategy of all the arts in the first half of this century. And they had succeeded in this mission by the end of the first quarter of the 1900s, in the prose of Joyce, the dance of Ruth Saint-Denis, and the music of Schoenberg, no less than in the art of Kandinsky.

Great revolutions in art have tended to begin slowly, like Gothic architecture, which was a century in the making before it achieved the perfection of Amiens; like the depiction of motion in two dimensions, which Florentine art had struggled toward for five decades before the Sistine ceiling. Kandinsky's earliest abstractions, however, like the poems of Homer, place us at once at the highest levels of fulfillment within a genre.

Since then hundreds of abstract artists have created truly memorable objects in a language that is in one sense unique to each of them and in another nearly universal. It says something not only about these individual artists, but also about our culture that they should have created for the first time an infinitely varied and supremely eloquent language based solely on the beauty and resonance of immanent form. It would now require a leap of our historical imaginations to recall how inconceivable the very idea was less than a century ago.

But the success of this revolution has not been uncontested. The political take on abstract art comes in roughly four different forms, two of the Left and two of the Right. Undoubtedly, the liberating of the arts from their ancient fealty to content and to reality was seen by many early in this century as essentially liberal, as striking a blow against the establishment, while uniting us in the fraternity of aesthetic relevance. But in due course, the excellence of this art—at least as I interpret it—caused serious people to admire it for intellectual rigor, which were entirely consonant with conservative thought. This, if I may summarize their thinking, is the thrust of *The New Criterion*'s editors.

As for the enemies of abstraction, post-modernists have no problem with anti-establishmentarianism, but they dismiss abstraction as more for the boudoir than the barricades, as something for aesthetes lacking in political engagement. Furthermore this art has been embraced by the academy and by "high seriousness" types, whom it is naturally in the post-modernists' interests to annoy as much as possible.

More traditionally, entrenched premodernists resist this kind of art because it seems to them too lacking in discipline. Their view was recently summed up in these pages by the estimable Hadley Arkes, who seems to paraphrase with approval one argument in Frederick Turner's *The Culture of Hope*: that "certain ingredients in art—musical scale, tonality, pictorial representation—'are built into our makeup as human beings.'" In other words, there is something essentially lacking in art that does not actually represent. To the more radical proponents of this theory, abstract art is the emperor's new clothes, an artsy fake by those who lack the skill to depict the real world as it really looks.

I once couldn't see the point of abstract art, which caused me energetically to resist it. But then one day—I was twenty and a half—I came upon some truly wretched abstractions which I compared, on the spot, with some paintings by Pollock and Rothko in a book I happened to have with me. Suddenly, I saw in the work of these two men something that had previously escaped me. It was a kind of hum of movement, a breath of life, a Promethean heat which was not specific to abstract art, but was universal in all good art, in all good literature, in all good music. In abstract art, because it was not laden with subject matter, one could see that quality, that *élan vitale* in its most naked form. Ever since then, whenever I look at any art, it is that quality that I am forever seeking and sometimes finding. □

SOUND ON DISC

Callous about Callas

RALPH DE TOLEDANO

MARIA CALLAS was a great operatic actress, and a diva in the style of the time when enthusiastic audiences drew the carriages of their favorites through the streets. She had sultry looks, a temperament to go with them, and a flair for publicity. Years ago, she would have forever commanded the adoration of her followers. But in the age of television and hi-fi, she suffered from too much exposure and from the insulting

Mr. Toledano is NR's music critic.

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ability of critics to analyze her voice in the absence of her presence. In her prime, that voice was a formidable instrument. But when it came to artistry and to purity of tone, she could never stand comparison with, let us say, Lucrezia Bori, or Renata Tebaldi. Can you imagine Maria Callas singing the *Ave Maria* or the *Salce* from Verdi's *Otello*? She would, as always, have sharped on the high notes.

Now Maria Callas has been immortalized by EMI in a limited-edition 4-CD boxed set, with a glossy-paper accompanying brochure, titled *Callas, La Divina*. Her fans, and they are still legion, will applaud and weep for the past. But the biographical commentary in the brochure, though it does its best, cannot explain away her fall from musical grace. It depicts her as "an ultimately tragic figure who sacrificed her career and eventually her life for a man who used her and then rejected her"—Aristotle Onassis, who had turned to the more newsworthy Jacqueline Kennedy. This is the stuff of which operas are made—but in the case of Callas, it is just not true. Beyond the lure of his billions, Onassis was never an *homme fatal*, and Callas pressed on to continue her career. What ended that career was not heartbreak but the most mortal of diseases for a singer, the incurable "shake" which destroys the ability to sing, particularly in the upper ranges. But in these recordings she stays fixed, as in the days when she could burst on the stage and draw waves of applause before she had sung a single note.

■ The "big treatment" can be a dangerous thing—and EMI is giving it to Sarah Chang, a 14-year-old Philadelphia-born Korean violinist, who has been concertizing since age 5. You can hear her on a disc playing Lalo's *Symphonie espagnole* (with the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra) and the Vieuxtemps Concerto No. 5 with the Philharmonic Orchestra—both conducted by Charles Dutoit. These are virtuoso traps designed to demonstrate technique—and this, Sarah Chang has in amazing abundance. There is nothing in these finger-busters that she does not take with ease and confidence. The test will come for her, as it does for every *Wunderkind*, when technique must be combined with musical understanding and emotional depth.

■ Turn therefore to Isaac Stern in Alban Berg's Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, which Sony gives us in its *A Life in Music* series of great Stern reissues. He is the consummate violinist in bowing and fingering, but beyond technique, he is also a musician—that is, he becomes part of what he is playing, an extension of the composer's emotion and art. Berg's concerto is a difficult and disturbing work, and one in which he made responsive music of Schoenberg's 12-tone rows. Stern gives its anti-lyricism a lyricism of its own, and his tonal beauty brings emotion to what in other hands would be a dry cerebralism. Even the harsh double-stops seem to sing.

■ Franz Schubert was driven by anticlericalism and the conflict of his homosexuality to struggle with an anguished faith. In the Masses he wrote, he always struck out from the Credo the affirmation of *unam sanctam et apostolicam ecclesiam* and tried to make personal what is the Church's affirmation. But it is in Schubert's Mass in E-Flat Major and its tumult and torment that we can understand his thwarted religiosity. This is the greatest of his works, greater than the symphonies that we hear in the concert hall. The musicologists find theological and emotional meaning in its chromaticism, its shifts in tempo, the richness and density of its score. But it is to the *Et incarnatus est*—a statement of Christianity's great and central Mystery, which in its simplicity transcends the involuted arguments of the early Fathers—that we must turn. The *Incarnatus* is sung movingly and brilliantly in this Sony recording by a boy soprano and two tenors. Bruno Weil, the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, and the Chorus Viennensis express and sustain Schubert's terror and solace at being confronted by God and the world's sins.

■ Haydn's *Heiligmesse*, among the last of his liturgical works, is coupled in a Sony recording with other religious music, including a stirring *Te Deum* dedicated to the Empress Marie Thérèse. The *Heiligmesse*—here beautifully performed by Bruno Weil, the Tolzer Knabenchor, and Tafelmusic—is an important work. Complex yet direct, it calls on Haydn's greatest skills, drawing on folk sources and on earlier voices, yet dominated by Haydn's tremendous command of musical composition and of the liturgy. Like his other Masses the *Heiligmesse* speaks searchingly and movingly, with an eloquence at one with his faith. Contrast it with the Rachmaninoff *Liturgy of St. John Crysostom*, a "concerto for choir" performed for Sony by the chamber choir Lege Artis. This, you might say, is Gregorian chant with a Russian accent—for the Russian church has never permitted the intrusion of instruments or much deviation from the original accent, and Rachmaninoff does not stray. It is beautiful music, beautifully performed, but it makes you wonder what liturgical music in the land of the Tsars would have been had the church opened the doors to a developing musical sensibility.

■ Years ago, RCA planted a microphone in front of Arturo Toscanini as he was rehearsing the NBC Symphony, issuing the record only to reviewers. I used to play it for my musician friends; the Maestro's singing and shouting were marvelous comedy, and it should be reissued. Much later, Columbia recorded a rehearsal of its Symphony Orchestra being put through the paces of Beethoven's symphonies by the great Bruno Walter, and this has been reissued by Sony. For those who are interested in the meticulous and sensitive care that goes into translating a score into sound, and in what the role of the conductor is in this process, this is a recording to study.

■ It's a very long way from the Earl Hines who recorded *West End Blues* with Louis Armstrong back in the very old Chicago days and the "Fatha" Hines on Chiaroscuro's *Back on the Street*. Yet the years have not taken the luster or the soul out of the Hines piano. On this record, cut in 1972 and now reissued on CD, Earl Hines does not have Armstrong but he is surrounded by some very fine instrumentalists—Jonah Jones on horn, Buddy Tate on clarinet and tenor, Cozy Cole on drums. All continue in the free-wheeling and imperishable tradition of jazz. *A Buck Clayton Jam Session*, also on Chiaroscuro, is likewise solid top-drawer jazz, but, sadly, Buck Clayton, who played so much great horn for Count Basie, can nowhere be heard. He directed the session and brought together some fine jazzmen—trombone Vic Dickenson, alto Lee Konitz, and Buddy Tate on sax. It's all in the tradition of the old 52nd Street days—with soloists who know how to wander from the melody and then triumphantly return. But can we forgive Buck for not putting horn to lips? □

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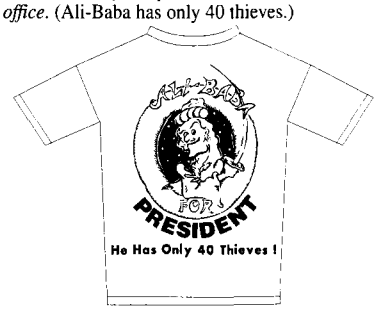

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ADLER

(Continued from page 45)

the environmental case against existing laws. Emphasizing economic costs sets up a dynamic that pits environmental protection against corporate profits, a debate that is difficult to win. It may be unreasonable that cleaning a Superfund cite can cost many millions of dollars, but the true outrage is that the 15-year-old program is doing nothing for the environment, let alone public health, while frustrating economic redevelopment in poor communities. Current hazardous-waste and species-protection regulations often create perverse incentives for increased waste production and the destruction of habitats. Challenging this status quo is anything but anti-environment.

During the farm-bill debate conservatives had the opportunity to eliminate one of the most environmentally destructive programs financed with taxpayer dollars—sugar subsidies. Yet rather than strike down this program—and thus both save consumers $1.4 billion a year *and* demonstrate that smaller government can produce greater environmental protection—Republicans opted to create a $200-million Everglades restoration program instead. This hardly shows the GOP to be "pro-environment"; the Clinton Administration had asked for twice that amount.

There is already one party that seeks environmental protection through big government. Republicans must learn that America does not need another. □

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TRANS-O-GRAM / Siegfried R. Reiner

1 P		2 T	3 F		4 B	5 R	6 L		7 M	8 G		9 E		10 H	11 Q	12 B	13 I	14 O		15 O	16 E
17 G	18 T	19 K	20 P	21 V		22 M	23 Q		24 I	25 K	26 C		27 Q	28 R	29 G	30 H	31 A		32 N	33 R	
34 I	35 B	36 D		37 V	38 A	39 C		40 B		41 F	42 Q	43 T	44 W		45 S	46 V	47 H	48 O	49 N		50 H
	51 E	52 C	53 O		54 G	55 V	56 P	57 F	58 U	59 W		60 K	61 U	62 G	63 N	64 D	65 I	66 V		67 L	68 Q
69 W	70 M	71 K	72 C		73 U	74 C		75 H	76 O	77 N		78 H	79 V	80 C	81 G	82 F		83 P	84 E	85 G	
86 U	87 I	88 A	89 O	90 R	91 K		92 E	93 V		94 M	95 B	96 H	97 L	98 G	99 E	100 P	101 W	102 F	103 J		104 V
105 W	106 S		107 C	108 J	109 Q	110 S	111 K	112 R	113 T	114 V	115 O	116 A		117 P	118 B	119 J	120 E		121 O	122 Q	123 T
	124 T	125 V	126 O	127 N	128 I		129 J	130 R	131 E	132 G	133 Q		134 S	135 H		136 J	137 C	138 S	139 F	140 U	
141 H	142 W	143 O	144 B	145 L	146 V		147 F	148 U	149 Q		150 R	151 A	152 H	153 C	154 U	155 S	156 G	157 V	158 D		159 O
	160 V	161 I	162 H	163 K		164 A	165 Q	166 F	167 I	168 D	169 N	170 P									

DEFINITIONS

A. Home of famous opera house down under — 31 88 116 164 38 151

B. Check, restrain — 118 95 35 40 4 12 144

C. Regret a fateful encounter (3 words) — 80 107 52 153 137 26 72 39 74

D. Crusoe washed up on a desert one — 168 158 64 36

E. Dishonorable, deserving reproach — 120 99 9 92 131 51 84 16

F. Purple gemstone said to prevent drunkenness — 147 3 102 166 41 82 139 57

G. Mennonite or Hutterite, for example — 81 29 132 62 17 54 85 156 8 98

H. Little brother wears big brother's, under protest (3 words) — 10 50 78 75 162 135 96 30 47 141 152

I. Goadeth, provoketh — 161 87 128 34 13 65 24 167

J. Established by means of bequest — 119 108 103 129 136

K. Flogged — 163 25 19 60 111 71 91

L. Melt — 6 145 97 67

M. Most populous Def. D in Hawaiian chain — 22 7 70 94

N. Caught — 169 127 63 32 77 49

O. Irretrievably lost, to a plumber (3 words) — 14 89 53 48 121 76 126 15 159 143 115

P. Unworthy, base — 1 170 20 100 83 117 56

Q. Virginia river rich with Civil War associations — 27 122 109 133 68 23 149 165 42 11

R. Defamation — 130 28 112 5 150 90 33

S. English university, namesake of John Henry Newman's movement — 138 110 45 134 155 106

T. Lengthy journey — 43 113 18 2 124 123

U. Site of spectacular Israeli hostage rescue (1976) — 140 148 58 61 86 73 154

V. Slick Willie's White House pilgrimage, to William Hogarth (2 words) — 114 104 160 93 66 79 55 46 21 125 157 37 146

W. Toadies (2 words) — 59 44 69 101 142 105

DIRECTIONS

The object of TRANS-O-GRAM is to fill in the puzzle diagram by guessing the words from their definitions, and transferring each letter of the guessed word to the correspondingly numbered square in the diagram. When the diagram is filled in it will spell out a quotation from some published work (reading normally from left to right, black boxes indicating the ends of words); also, when the words have all been filled in above, their initial letters will spell out the author and the title (or topic) of the quoted work. The acrostic feature, and the relative word-lengths in the diagram, will assist in the solution. Spelling and definition on the authority of *Webster's Deluxe Unabridged Dictionary*, Second Edition.

Solution to last issue's Trans-O-Gram. RUSH LIMBAUGH: The Truth: "A nation that does not hold any truths to be self-evident does not have the moral confidence to judge anything with moral authority and moral certainty. Such a nation will inevitably punish the innocent and let the guilty go free."

Correction. In last issue's Solution, the source of the text (I Corinthians) was incorrectly substituted for the description (The Resurrection) on which the puzzle was based. Apologies all around.

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ON THE RIGHT / Wm. F. Buckley Jr.

Colin Powell, VP

NEW YORK, MARCH 29

Concerning the proposal: Colin Powell for Vice President, a few observations:

1. The primary qualification for a vice-presidential selection is: Will he substantially enhance the probability of the election of the presidential candidate?

On the matter of General Powell, the answer to that question, at this reading, is Yes. In fact, his name conjoined to that of Bob Dole makes up the only slate that would defeat Clinton–Gore. Granted, the popularity of General Powell would almost certainly diminish soon after he began to campaign. In part his high prestige rests on his reputation as an Olympian figure, undefiled by politics.

It was so with General Eisenhower in 1952. *The New Leader* magazine illustrated the sharp turn in public opinion the week after Eisenhower's first political address in his home state. The headline was "IKE STOPPED AT ABILENE." It is not even safe to assume that Powell would sweep the black vote. The last estimate on this question, in October, was that he would carry 30 per cent of black Americans. But that is a critical swing, given that 95 per cent have gone Democratic over the years. And, true, the fact of a black on the national ticket would turn some white voters away. The awful social/ethnic division highlighted by the reaction to the O. J. Simpson verdict instructs us that there is a body of Americans not yet prepared to vote for a black candidate. As much is probably true of a Jewish candidate; as much was certainly true of a Catholic candidate up until JFK.

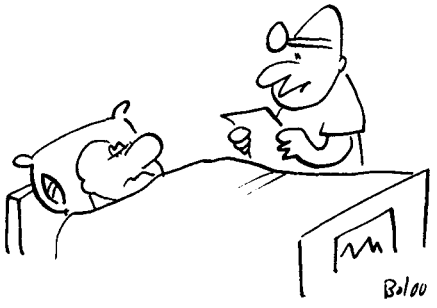
2. The ideological objections to General Powell as Vice President are of an entirely different order from what they'd have been if he were running for President. A presidential candidate's position on such high-ignition questions as abortion and affirmative action matters substantially. The voters are asked to express their choice both politically and symbolically. If Bob Dole were flat-out in favor of abortion he would not win, either the nomination or the election.

It is another thing when it is a vice-presidential candidate being considered. For one thing, by accepting the nomination, the vice-presidential candidate subordinates his position on divisive issues, deferring to the presidential candidate. It is simply inconceivable that nominee Powell could tour the country during the fall taking issue with Dole's position on abortion or for that matter any other important political question. The last time that happened was Andrew Jackson–John C. Calhoun. If the voter were deciding whom to vote for on the assumption that Dole would die or retire, it is hardly probable that on being sworn in, President Powell would reverse his predecessor's position on abortion.

On the question of affirmative action, the Republican delegates in San Diego are going to realize that the direction the debate will take depends on two factors. The first is how the plebiscite that would forbid affirmative action fares in California. The second is how the Supreme Court, which is narrowly divided on the issue, swings. Affirmative action is an empirical failure and a philosophical disaster. Its destiny is not in the hands of the Republican nominee for Vice President.

3. On the matter of Powell's designating himself as a "Rockefeller Republican" we are constrained to ask two questions. The first is, Did it substantially damage Gerald Ford when he named Rockefeller as Vice President in 1974? Evidence is not abundant that the selection was an abomination among Republicans of the day. And this was owing to two factors that have been lost in the mists of memory. The first is that although Rockefeller had been the embodiment of liberal Republicanism, he was always on the right side on foreign policy: the anti-Soviet side. A second is that the Rockefeller of the Seventies was, on domestic questions, a changed man. I was present at a small dinner party in 1972 when Governor Rockefeller raised his glass to Governor Reagan and said that he needed to admit that on most domestic issues, Reagan had been wiser than he.

4. If Colin Powell accepts the nomination, nothing like the treachery suggested will have been done. In 1964 I urged candidate Goldwater to name ex-President Eisenhower as his running-mate. Quixotic stuff, but an early recognition that a presidential candidate wants a running-mate who will help him get to the White House, and it dazzles the imagination that anyone who cares about abortion or affirmative action would in effect endorse the re-election of Bill Clinton for the platonic satisfaction of a loyalty-test rejection of Colin Powell. □



"The transplant went okay, but your insurance company is rejecting the bill."

Rich-Baiting Time

NEW YORK, APRIL 9

Nothing galls more, when people are having hard luck, than to view extravagant advantages being enjoyed by others. It is a theme Pat Buchanan has milked in his envy-courting campaign, and now *60 Minutes* with Lesley Stahl.

Her special target was poor Robert Allen, head of AT&T. I say "poor" Robert Allen not because he is poor (he made the equivalent of $20 million last year) but because he was pathetically ill-equipped to face Lesley Stahl's camera and her gritty questioning, as she caught him in some hallway, going from somewhere to somewhere. I pause to recommend that any CEO who traffics with *60 Minutes* in extemporaneous circumstances should be fined $1 million. Anyway, the conversation was as you'd have guessed. . . .

Stahl: "I'm wondering if you would respond to the charges that it isn't fair that you've gotten a big pay increase, a big pay package for millions and millions of dollars, when you're laying off thousands and thousands of people."

What on earth could Mr. Allen answer? He could say, 1) The reason I got a big raise is that I figured out how to carry the current load of business with forty thousand fewer employees. Or 2) The benefits of that efficiency flow to AT&T, sure, but also to the public: for exactly the same service in 1996, the average family will be paying $11 less. Or 3) I'm being paid a hell of a lot of money, but obviously it isn't money that otherwise might have been spent to keep forty thousand people employed. If I gave up my salary and paid over every penny of it to the forty thousand workers discharged that would end them with $500 each, not much more than a week's pay. And 4) At $20 million I am being paid 1/3,450th of the gross. If Colonel Sanders pocketed one fried chicken for every 3,450 he sold, that might be thought reasonable, no, Lesley?

Miss Stahl had on as her stalking horse

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an accountant who specializes in executive salaries, and the program finished with a nice philosophical fillip.

Accountant: "You know, it's funny. The company will sit there and they'll say, very soberly, that 'we're sorry' . . . But, you know, it's the doctrine of comparative advantage; you go where the labor costs are cheapest."

Well, said the accountant, he had done a relative test on earnings and he found that U.S. CEOs were earning 3.2 times more than their British counterparts. "Why don't we bring all the Brits over to run American companies because we can get them for a third the price and they speak better English than we do?"

Great fun and games, but all of this doesn't have much to do with the real world. 1) For the most part, talent is fungible. If you are a good manufacturer in America, you will be a good one in Germany. Recently, Volkswagen hired away the production chief of General Motors, Jose Ignacio Lopez de Arriortua, at a salary we can only guess at. 2) American companies are free to hire whomever they wish to act as CEO—who is stopping them? 3) At almost every level, America does things on a grander scale than other countries. To warrant such a salary as Mr. Allen gets, you begin in England by starting a phone company that grosses $79 billion per year in revenue.

The demagogic economics of Lesley Stahl and her accountant having been analyzed, this much remains to be said, namely that some CEOs are doing the best they can to give American capitalism a bad name. The first point to make is that shareholders will have a difficult time believing that the board of directors is other than a pawn of management when big raises are given even when the company's performance is lousy. AT&T made a profit last year of $139 million, which is peanuts. At 5 per cent of gross, it would have come in at over $3 billion. Obviously there were write-offs of one kind or another, but the shareholder would be interested to know whether the president being rewarded was the same president who got the company into the bad deal.

But even that apart, there is a point at which one stares at the salary and asks oneself—*should* ask oneself—Is this thing looking ugly? What do we have here, voluptuary greed? Bill Gates can have any salary he wants, since he practically owns his company and it is richer than King Solomon's mines. He takes twenty million. The super-rich CEOs should pause just for a minute and ask whether there isn't a sensibility they'd just as soon not scorn. Yes, it is silly to bring up, as though they had a bearing on one another, increased executive salaries and diminished work forces. But that paralogism doesn't authorize scornful inattention to the implications of preposterous salaries. □

The Bishop's Bull

NEW YORK, APRIL 2

Nothing lights up Andy Rooney of *60 Minutes* quite like the opportunity to disparage Christianity. This is not to suggest that he is friendlier to Judaism or Islam: one gathers, in his company, that the very idea of God is simply—infra dig; beneath the dignity of modern man. To the extent Andy's face can light up, then, it did last Sunday when he reported on the diktat of Bishop Fabian Bruskewitz of Lincoln, Nebraska. All that the poor bishop had done to make his way to Andy Rooney's attention was to tell his flock (85,000 parishioners) that by May 15 they should dissociate themselves from 12 organizations (he listed them) or incur excommunication, which is the capital sentence of the Roman Catholic Church, denying to the excommunicate access to the sacraments.

Among the anathematized organizations are Eastern Star, Job's Daughters, and Rainbow Girls. Apparently these are Masonic organizations, and what exactly they are up to that offends the word of God as transcribed by Rome isn't known on this watch, but the obvious targets of the bishop were Planned Parenthood and something named Call to Action. Planned Parenthood began generations ago as an organization promoting birth control by the use of contraceptives. In recent years it is primarily identified with enthusiasm for abortion. Most of those who favor the right to abortion nevertheless deplore its use as an instrument of population control, but PP is correctly judged as the outfit that makes no distinction between the pill and the scalpel.

Call to Action, with its 15,000 members, has a heavier role in the bishop's world, inasmuch as it is an organization made up primarily of Catholics identified with two goals, the ordination of women as priests, and the end of a celibate priesthood. A Nebraska representative of the organization had written in to the bishop requesting a "dialogue" on these questions, and it was that request that triggered the bishop's bull.

There are two aspects to the episode. The first has to do with the integrity of the Catholic Church, the second, with the finesse of its bishops. Concerning the former, the Church is organized around certain tablets of belief, and to the extent it is now and again required that these be interpreted, the authority to do so is given to the Pope and the so-called Magisterium, from which he draws guidance.

Now there are many Catholics who disbelieve this or that pronouncement of the Church, but disbelief is not tolerated concerning some positions. The Catholic who does not believe in the Trinity should instantly designate himself as an ex-Catholic. A year or so back, Pope John Paul announced that all the arguments favoring the ordination of women and an end to the requirement of celibacy among the priesthood had been heard and had been rejected. No Catholic disputes the authority of the Pope to pronounce a question as closed, even if it is not in fact closed in the minds of many of the faithful. But their duty is then to govern the nature of their dissent. They are not encouraged to agitate formally for the renunciation of a position pronounced as settled.

On the matter of abortion, it is inexplicable that there should be dissent. The very biology of Christianity asserts the sacredness of the unborn child. For a Catholic to encourage an organization that proselytizes for abortion is more than sheer truancy, it is mutiny; somebody has to get off that ship, and the general vote is that the Pope is best left at the wheel.

All of this is pretty plain, but so is it plain that the short fuse of the Bishop of Lincoln is something of an embarrassment. I asked the late Bishop Fulton Sheen once, on *Firing Line*, to name the excommunicable offenses. He replied, "The desecration of the Blessed Sacrament." Yes, and what else? He refused to add another such offense, not because he wouldn't acknowledge that there were others, but because he felt that to enumerate them was in some way to stand between the sinner and the charity of God.

In New Orleans a generation ago a bishop threatened excommunication of any Catholic who stood in the way of the racial integration of the Catholic schools. A very heavy intercession, by the way, but applauded at the time by the liberal community. In the early Fifties, Cardinal Segura of Seville, going gradually around the bend, pronounced excommunication for anyone who danced. A few months after his death, visiting in Seville, I asked my solemn, pious guide what life was now like. She responded, "When the cardinal died, he and we passed on to a better world." Bishop Bruskewitz should pause to consider the fraternal implications of his sortie. If his move was called for in today's circumstances, then the 162 other bishops in America are delinquent. If he was merely giving way to histrionic impulses, he should meditate on Cardinal Segura. □

(Universal Press Syndicate)

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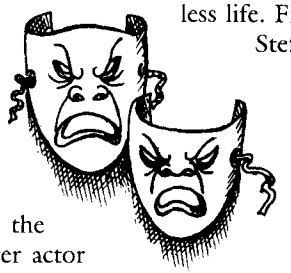
THE MISANTHROPE'S CORNER

FLORENCE KING

I HAVE figured out a painless way to follow Campaign '96. Instead of suffering through CNN and C-SPAN, I watch old movies. The current politicos turn up in them like figures from Greek mythology who assumed different forms.

Anything starring Miriam Hopkins also stars Hillary Rodham Clinton, especially *Becky Sharp*. The symbol-rich love scenes between Garbo and Gilbert in *Queen Christina* feature a cameo appearance by George Stephanopoulos as the grape. Al Gore plays the title in *Raintree County*, as well as the romantic lead in post-war flicks starring the Great Stone Stone of the late Forties, Guy Madison.



The late Forties were also the years of the Rat, the character actor who always made the woman sitting in the row behind you whisper, "I don't like his face." Rats came in three types. The Handsome Rat was Zachary Scott, the two-timing chiseler in *Mildred Pierce*, but sadly, he has no counterpart on today's hustings. He was too slimy for even the most disaster-prone campaign, so unequivocally feral that Bob Dole would take one look at him and say, "He's the only thing about America that America isn't about."

The other two Rat types are well-represented in Campaign '96. The Obnoxious Rat was played by nasal, prematurely balding Dan Duryea, the silver screen's ubiquitous cocksure nephew; his heir is nasal, prematurely balding James Carville, who plays the cocksure nephew in *The Little Foxes*.

Arthur Kennedy was the Weak Rat, a part he owned after playing Branwell Brontë in 1946's *Devotion*. He spent thirty years making Weak Rat movies, all starring White House press secretary Mike McCurry, whose washed-out blondness and unsteady gaze make him an Arthur Kennedy lookalike.

Bill Clinton? Remember Sonny Tufts? He was the big bashful lug who operated on the principle that the way to a woman's bed is through her maternal instinct. However, limiting Clinton to Tufts's light comedies overlooks the great tragic role he was born for.

In *Letter from an Unknown Woman*, Louis Jourdan plays Stefan Brandt, a celebrated Viennese pianist and dedicated roué who seduces the young Joan Fontaine and leaves her pregnant. She eventually marries a rich, kindly older man and resigns herself to a passionless life. Fifteen years pass. Suddenly, Stefan turns up again and she is promptly consumed by passion. So is he, but when she goes to his room she makes a shattering discovery: the dissolute Stefan has had so many women that he doesn't remember her and proceeds to seduce her from scratch.

The mother of all Campaign '96 movies, as I discovered the other night, is *Come Back, Little Sheba*, with Shirley Booth and Burt Lancaster.

Doc Delaney is a well-bred man whose life has been ruined by a shotgun marriage to his social inferior, the slovenly Lola. Forced to quit medical school, he is now a chiropractor and a member of Alcoholics Anonymous. Though outwardly neat, polite, scholarly, and well-spoken, he is one drink away from mayhem.

Trouble starts when Lola rents a room to Marie, an art student and her opposite in every way: young, slim, energetic, fastidious, and an early riser. Doc idealizes Marie as a symbol of his own youthful promise until he sees her in a compromising situation with Turk, a crude jock intent on giving her the old lock-and-load. Mistakenly thinking that Marie has yielded to this male version of Lola, Doc goes on a bender, busts up the house, and tries to stab his wife.

Why did this seem so familiar to me? I had seen the movie many times before, of course, but that wasn't why. This was another kind of familiarity. . . .

Suddenly, it hit me. Grabbing pen and paper, I scribbled furiously, intent on capturing the inchoate associations tumbling through my mind before they slipped back into the misty subconscious regions they had occupied ever since the New Hampshire primary.

Doc Buchanan is a well-bred man with a fatal addiction: campaigning. A columnist by profession, he has put aside writing and thinking to follow his new ambitions, and now he is an unrecovered candidate. Though his friends attest that he is neat, polite, scholarly, and well-spoken, he is one caucus away from mayhem.

The measure of his addiction is what it has done to his wife. She's starting to look like Shirley Booth: the same full, fleshy face, the same expression of tired sweetness, the same lingering traces of the pertness she must have had once, but has no more.

HOW could she be pert? She's been standing in high heels ever since Doc Buchanan went on his bender. Even Pat Nixon was allowed to sit down while she gazed in adoration at her speechifying husband, but poor Shelley has to stand up.

Every woman who has worn high heels can interpret the look on Shelley Buchanan's face. It's subtly different from the other female "look" that signals menstrual cramps. That one contains a glimmer of hope because we know we will have a nice flat stomach the next day. The high-heels look is one of unmitigated despair because we know our feet will be swollen the next day. Hopelessness of this magnitude conjures up Shirley Booth's Lola Delaney, flopping down the stairs in her bathrobe, eyes at half-mast and tired all over.

Adding to Shelley's exhaustion is a woman who is her opposite in every way: Bay Buchanan; lean as a pitchfork, flat as a drawbridge, a quivering longbow of energy, a human alarm clock without a snooze button made sleepless by her lust for the votes of America's Turks, those professional peasants of the Buchanan Brigades more accurately called Little Sheba Republicans.

Doc and Bay Buchanan deserve to spend ten thousand years in Purgatory massaging Shelley's feet, except that would require Shelley to be in Purgatory with them. She deserves to go straight to Heaven, there to receive from St. Peter himself a pair of golden Hush Puppies in which to wiggle her toes through eternity. □

Miss King is the author of The Florence King Reader *and other books.*

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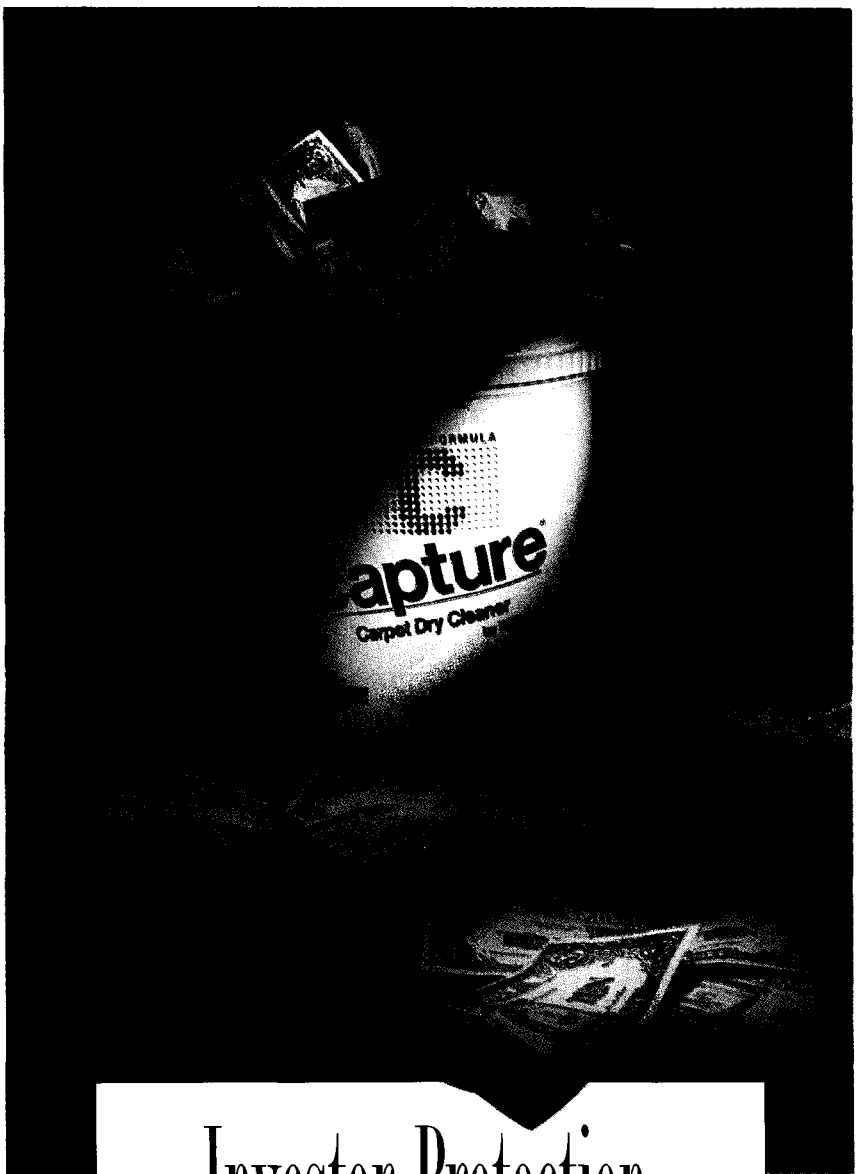
MILLIKEN



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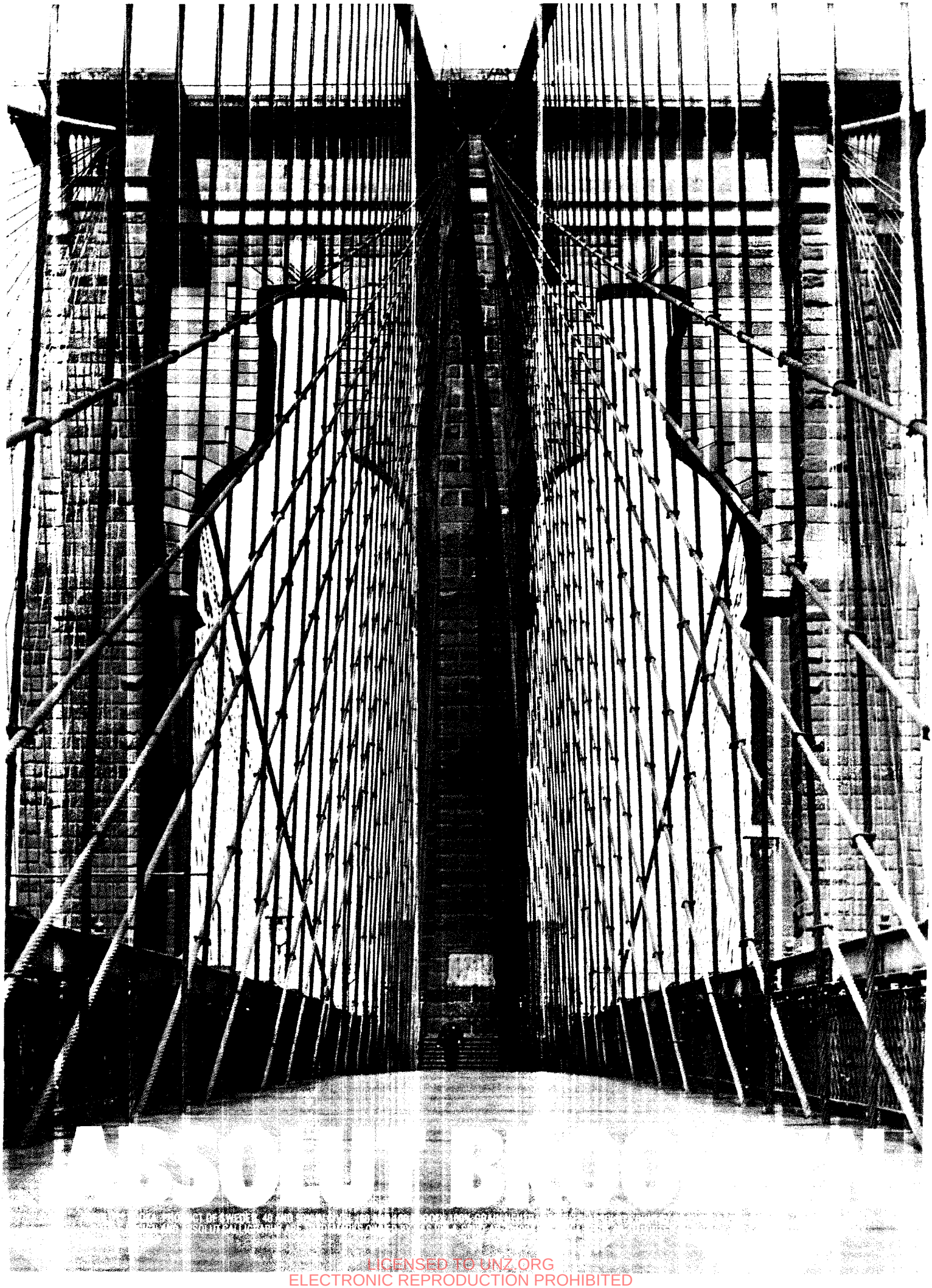

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